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NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

PUBLICATION FUND.

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XXII.



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COLLECTIONS  
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NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
FOR THE YEAR  
1889.

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PUBLICATION FUND SERIES.

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THE DEANE PAPERS.

VOL. IV.

1779-1781.





## THE DEANE PAPERS.

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ARTHUR LEE TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Paris, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 1779.

THE enclosed authenticated copy of my letters will shew you that in those which were published under the signature of Philaethes they have omitted these essential words—*Ce n'est pas une affaire de Commerce que nous traitons, mais de la Politique la plus etendue.* This would have directly defeated the conclusion they have imposed upon the public, "that it was an affair of commerce." Those of M. Beaumarchais of which I shall send copies as he has given them to me, will also defeat their other conclusion that Mr. Deane procured these supplies, because it will appear that everything was settled concerning them, and the sending of them commenced before his arrival in Europe. I send you as a duplicate copies of my letters in Beaumarchais hand as Mr. Francis must acknowledge. There is a key to all that is said and insisted upon about returns, and that is, that it was to serve as a cover to the transaction should it ever be discovered. This I stated originally to the Committee, so it was stated to me at first, and so I always understood it. Notwithstanding this, if M. Beaumarchais can prove, or has proved, that he was obliged to borrow and furnish money himself for the purchase of these things, undoubtedly he must be paid. And this may perhaps explain a passage in one of his letters, which is—*les difficultés que l'ai trouvées dans ma negociation aupres du Ministre m'ont fait prendre la partie de former une Compagnie*

qui fera passer au plutot les secours de munitions et de poudre a votre ami. All this I consider'd as a farther cover, because from the character I had heard of him, it would have been utterly incredible to me that he could really form a mercantile company or that any Merchants could possibly be found to risque such sums in the uncertain state of things, and upon my bare promise of returns. Neither had I ever, as I wrote him, considered it as a mercantile transaction. But if he can prove otherwise, incredible as it may seem, I can only say I was deceived.

M. Beaumarchais has discovered a great deal to me in conversation on this subject, which shews what iniquitous means have been used by Mr. Deane to keep me in the dark and get this business settled by secret and indirect means. I shall state the whole to Congress by the first opportunity. At present, I shall only observe that M. Beaumarchais makes it appear that he lent Mr. Deane 30,000 liv. for some private scheme of trade, and 20,000 liv. for his pocket, as Mr. Deane pretended, the last of which sums he has not repaid, and probably intended should be charged to the public in M. Beaumarchais general demand, and so pass unnoticed. He lent also 4,800 liv. to Mr. Carmichael, and at that very time both these Gentlemen were filling his ears with tales about me, and have been very industrious in endeavouring to obtain a payment of his demand at Congress, which neither of them, while they were here, would ever inform Dr. Franklin and myself they believed to be just. Neither those Gentlemen nor Mr. Gerard are, as I conceive, disinterested witnesses in this business. It ought to be in M. Beaumarchais power to clear up the matter without having recourse to such suspicious evidence by the testimony of those who constitute the Company and supplied the money. If such persons exist, their coming forth will decide whether it was public or private money.

But of this Congress are the Judges. I have done

my duty to the public, and sustained in this, as in every other instance, not a little abuse for having done so. My wish ever was, and is, that justice may be done. With regard to what I wrote him of officers and engineers, it was, I think, founded on the Committee's letter to me; but what I intended was, that they as well as the ships should be sent as an aid by France, and not quartered upon the American establishment; much less did I ever propose to give them rank and commissions in the army. It is not a little surprising that if Mr. Deane did indeed, as is now pretended in his excuse, adopt this measure from my proposal, he should never have wrote me a syllable about it, nor have consulted me on the subject.

The most vigorous movements are making by France and Spain for pushing the enemy to the utmost. On their side every effort is exerted as at the last extremity. Their Militia voted double, all protections taken away, companies and individuals raising regiments and equipping ships. I cannot but think, tho' they rejected the motion for it in both Houses, that they will withdraw their troops from you, because as it is beyond all probability that they can support them from Europe, they must otherwise leave them to perish. You will hear of a blow being struck against them soon, which they little expect and which it is not proper for me to mention. They are, and are likely to continue, without allies; and if all human things be not fallacious, they must be compelled to submission soon. But it will be always safer on your side to act with vigour, and not depend too much on others. I am tired of my 340, a, xxxi, and wish I were at 191, 6, xxxvii.

Farewell.

[ARTHUR LEE.]

To the Hon<sup>ble</sup> R. H. Lee, or F. L. Lee, or Samuel Adams, or James Lovell, Esq<sup>r</sup> at Congress.

*Bancroft Mss., Lenox Library.*

## WHITEHEAD HUMPHREYS ON THOMAS PAINE.

MR. PRINTER,—In one of the publications under the signature of Common Sense is this very trite and common though just observation : “an anonymous detractor is the serpent of society ;” how much more he that detracts merit, who boldly obtrudes his person upon the public view, it is to determine. The palm of matchless impudence shall be his, and he may boast unrivalled the contempt of shame.

Any man who reads the story of a worthy citizen whose ease, health, and pleasure having been sacrificed in the public service, is prosecuted and persecuted by beings who owe security to contemptibility, and importance to malevolence, will feel the emotions of honest indignation. His astonishment will be equal to his indignation that bold assertions, without evidence to support them, and dark insinuation devoid of probability, should for a moment turn the tide of popular opinion against the friends of mankind. Should we hear that some faithless Carthaginian had taken refuge in Rome from the justice which pursued his debts or his crime ; that having vainly opposed the measures taken for public liberty and safety, at once a sudden convert he had mouthed at Hannibal, and bellowed out for Fabius that wormed into notice by a talent for abuse, he had been raised to a confidential office by a faction who laboured to undermine the great Fabius himself, the Saviour of his country ; that to forward the views of his patrons, and promote the interest of his natal Carthaginian soil, he had betrayed the confidence reposed in him ; that he had wantonly wounded the fairest character, branded the firmest patriots with the imputation of sinister views, and charged the generous and disinterested with an inordinate thirst for dishonest and disgraceful gain ; that he had endeavoured to spread far and wide doubts and suspicions of the senate, to sap the confidence of the

Romans, to weaken their councils and distract their views; that when chosen a tribune of the people, he had laboured to keep even bread itself from the army, under pretence of a public scarcity, and thus to leave the country a prey to her foes; and that notwithstanding all this the Romans should listen to and confide in this man, this faithless Carthaginian. Should we, I say, hear these things, what should we think of the Romans? Change but the name, my countrymen, and the story is told about you. The Romans were an honest, unsuspecting people and so are the Americans? Who was an Englishman? Tom P——. Who was a Tory? Tom P——. Who wrote *Crisis*, and abused Howe? Tom P——. Who was made secretary to the committee of foreign affairs? Tom P——. Who recommended him to that office? . . . Who betrayed state affairs? Tom P——. For whom did he betray them? . . . Who has traduced the tried friends of America? Tom P——. Who has endeavoured to raise suspicions against congress? Tom P——. Who was made a committee man? Tom P——. Who proposed a resolution to the committee to prevent supplies from going to the army? Tom P——. Who maintains Tom P——? Nobody knows. Who is paid by the enemy? Nobody knows. Who best deserves it? Tom P——.

I have long been a spectator of the calumnies thrown out against some of the best and fairest characters on this continent, and beheld their silence with astonishment. I could attribute it to nothing but the consciousness of innocence, or the timidity of guilt; prone to think charitable on the one hand, but deeply alarmed on the other, I waited the evidence which could justify such assertions. It did not appear; but instead of it new and accumulated charges were made, and they were received with the same contemptuous or callous insensibility. I set myself to inquire into the private characters of the gentlemen traduced, and I found them to be directly contrary to the allegation made. Upon

publishing the journals of congress I find that such of them as are members of that body have preserved a conduct totally different from that which had been attributed to them. I again examined the various publications, to discover, if possible, some foundation on which these high wrought charges could be supported. My search was in vain, unless indeed I was disposed to take assertions for proof. I then drew a comparison between those who made the assertions, and those against whom they were made ; and if property, probity and honor, with unshaken perseverance in our righteous cause, through the most gloomy prospects and distressful circumstances, if these things are of any weight, the balance is clearly in favor of the accused. If these things can be admitted, as pledges to our country for the fidelity, the attachment and the zeal of her citizens, if these can form a shield against the shafts of detraction, those shafts must fall blunt to the earth. Being therefore fully convinced of their integrity and innocence, and being convinced that not only from justice but also from interest the public ought to cherish those servants whose talents have been eminently useful, I cannot do better than unravel from time to time motives and views, the knowledge of which will enable the world to read writers as well as writings. I shall not attempt to defend any man or measure that does not deserve to be defended, and if in the course of what I shall say, those are dragged out who now lie behind the curtain, they must thank themselves for it. Let the dogs be silent, or the huntsman shall appear.

In Hall and Seller's Gazette, of the thirtieth of June, there are two papers, the one signed Common Sense, and the other Tiberius Gracchus, both of them levelled at a member of congress, supposed to be the author of a paper signed Americanus ; both of them founded on a supposition that he had contended for excluding America from the fisheries. If this gentleman has meddled in the government affairs of Pennsylvania, let him answer for himself ; but he and every

other our representatives in congress has a right to expect protection from the virtuous Whigs of America, while in the execution of his duty. I have reason to believe, and authority to say, that the Hon. Mr. Morris was not the author of the piece signed Americanus, and neither saw it, heard it, or knew of it before the publication; that neither he nor any other man now in Congress ever held up an idea of ceding to Great Britain, or any power on earth, the right of fishing; and I call upon those gentlemen for the proof, if any they have, to contradict me, in order that the man, or men, who shall have wantonly or wickedly misrepresented the debates of that honorable body, may be held up to the reproach they justly merit. The insinuation against that gentleman with respect to our finances is equally ill founded, and the minutes and the members of congress cannot but bear witness to his zeal for private justice, and to promote the public interests. Those who advanced their money to the United States in the hour of danger and distress, when to so much greater private advantage they might otherwise have employed it, are bound to a grateful acknowledgement of his exertion in their favor; and as far as America may derive credit from the reputation of honesty and fair dealing, so far will she feel an equal obligation. Alike unfair and far more despicable is the insinuation against another member of that honorable body. To whom is our country most indebted? Is it not to those who risked most for her salvation? Those who could suffer much and gain but little by the contest, exhibited real patriotism; but where is the merit of those who, safe in insignificance, could lose nothing in storm, and might even hope for a share of plunder in a general shipwreck, who might be raised into importance by a turbulency of spirit, and satiate the lust of power by embarking on a troubled ocean? Is there a man among us whose consequence is derived from the calamities of his country, and though she should be plunged in inextricable



debts to gratify private ambition, hath a certain exemption from the common calamity? Who can pay nothing, because he has nothing to pay? *Timothy, art thou that man?* If thou art, then be thou the advocate for war! For inexpiable war! But can you, my countrymen, who feel the weight of it; whose toil, whose riches, and whose blood must be expended to support it? Can you wish to prolong its distresses, to renew the cries of the orphan and the widow, to increase the number of those who groan in captivity, to add weight to their chains, and aggravate the afflictions of the afflicted?

From the moment that the question of the fisheries became a public topic, my curiosity has been excited to examine it. Great authorities appear on either side. One party contending that a nation may lawfully hold them exclusively; the other that all nations have an equal and common right. Different nations have patronized the different doctrines. England hath maintained the former, and Holland the latter, for more than a century. Much ink and much blood have been spilt upon the occasion; but, after all, it remains as such things usually do, quite undecided; and the arguments of either party are made use of as best suits the interest and conveniency of states. I am firmly persuaded that the God of nature intended the large fisheries, now alluded to, as a common benefit to all his creatures; and in this persuasion I do not hesitate to affirm that it would be a species of treason ever to give up, in the most distressful situation of our affairs, a right so important to America. And if, after a peace, Great Britain should disturb us in the exercise of that right, I conceive such disturbances to be among those lawful causes of war which would justify us in a declaration of it. And in calling upon our allies to assist us.

It is absurd to suppose that Great Britain would insist on our renouncing this, our claim of right. It would be both impolitic and unjust. It would be the

downright Popery of politics, which, not content with the free enjoyment of its own opinions, would force an assent to them from the rest of mankind. But would it be wise in us, after Great Britain shall agree to acknowledge our independence, which on our own principles necessarily involves the common right of fishing; would it, I say, be wise or politic to refuse the offer, and to carry on still farther this destructive war purely to compell the king of Great Britain to renounce the heresies contained in the works of Selden and other such writers, and avowed, declared, and maintained in divers public acts of the said king and of his predecessors, to force from him a confession that the doctrine of exclusive right to seas, bank, and fisheries is erroneous, impious, and absurd; to oblige him to retract all such aforegone declarations, and in the most clear, positive, and express terms acknowledge that America and all other nations have a common right to take fish in those places in the seas which he hath heretofore claimed as his own? Motives of interest and policy would undoubtedly prevent Great Britain from commencing hostilities by plundering our fishermen; but motives of pride, and what she calls national honor, would equally prevent her from making the desired acknowledgement.

As to the calling on our allies to prosecute the war with us for this end, I cannot think it so clear as some gentlemen seem to do, that they would incline to it. We should think it very ridiculous if the most Christian king should require us to carry on the war until his brother of England should renounce the title, King of France. Perhaps it would not appear much more wise to the French ministry, should we require them to carry on the war until he shall renounce the claim to be king of the fishing banks.

If there be on earth an undoubted indisputable right of individuals or of nations, certainly it is the right of private opinion; and so long as opinions are not accompanied with injurious acts, it is at best but an absurdity

to contest them. Here then stands the question, is it just or prudent to continue the present war, in order to compell Great Britain to acknowledge that we have as good a right to the fisheries as she has? Is it probable that other nations will stand by and see these thirteen great and powerful states maul and pummel the two little weak and insignificant islands of Great Britain and Ireland, until she makes such acknowledgement—an acknowledgement which, consisting of mere words, would neither validate our claim, nor secure us in the peaceable exercise of our right? Certainly it becomes those either indoors or out, who maintain this doctrine, to provide solid argument and powerful fleets. Until this be done, neither Common Sense nor Uncommon Sense, Tiberius Gracchus nor Tiberius Nero, shall ever persuade me to be of their party. Nor do I believe that invective abuse, or any other the embellishments which adorn their oratory, can persuade the citizens of these United States to desert those whose firm councils have gained applause abroad, and merited confidence at home, while they prudently labour to fix the great object of American independence, and establish that peace, liberty, and safety, which are the objects of the present contest; and however it may suit the factious views of some men to continue the war, or whatever hopes they may entertain who expect to ingratiate themselves with the common enemy, by sowing dissensions among us, and diminishing the respect which is due to congress, you, my dear countrymen, are too wise and too honest not to discern your friends from your foes. Examine for yourselves, determine for yourselves, and let those feel your resentment who deserve it.

CATO.

*Pennsylvania Evening Post, July 9, 1779.*

## THOMAS PAINE TO WHITEHEAD HUMPHREYS.

In the Evening Post of last Friday, July ninth, in a piece under the signature of Cato, the following queries, with their answers and inuendoes, were put :

"Who was an Englishman?" "Tom P——."

"Who was a Tory?" "Tom P——."

"Who wrote the Crisis, and abused Howe?" "Tom P——."

"Who was made secretary to the committee of foreign affairs?" "Tom P——."

"Who recommended him to that office?" " . . . ."

"Who betrayed state affairs?" "Tom P——."

"For whom did he betray them?" " . . . ."

"Who has traduced the tried friends of America?" "Tom P——."

"Who has endeavoured to raise suspicions against congress?" "Tom P——."

"Who was made a committee man?" "Tom P——."

"Who proposed a resolution to the committee to prevent supplies from going to the army?" "Tom P——."

"Who maintains Tom P——?" "Nobody knows."

"Who is paid by the enemy?" "Nobody knows."

"Who best deserves it?" "Tom P——."

I do not take notice of these queries, &c., from any apprehension of their being credited to my injury, but to expose the meanness of the wretch who published them.

As I take it for granted he meant me, and no other person, I sent to the printer for the name of the author, or of the person by whose authority he published them. Mr. Towne, the printer, came to me in about two hours after, and told me that "he had not liberty to give him up."

If the author chuses to submit himself to be suspected for a lying incendiary scoundrel, by advancing

what he dares not own, he is, for the present, welcome ; but unless he gives up his name, or the printer for him, the one or the other will probably meet with treatment different to what they expected.

If he alludes to my publications respecting Mr. Deane, I reply, let Mr. Deane answer for himself. He is on the spot, so am I. I can but consider myself, and I know I am considered, both by friends and enemies, as a principal means in rescuing this country from *imposition and a dangerous species of monopolising* ; for what can be *more* dangerous to her commerce and her honor than members of congress forming trading companies in partnership with their ambassadors ? The state of Virginia, on discovering that three of their delegates were partners in this company, not only appointed others in their room, but have passed a law to prevent such practices in future ; and I hope every state will, in some line or other, do the same. If the exposing this company was revealing a state secret, or if stating the loss of the dispatches, or saying that the supplies, represented as a debt by Mr. Deane, were offered and intended as a present to the states, were revealing state secrets, I confess myself the person who revealed them ; and in so doing I have done the states justice, which I should not have done had I acted otherwise. But the exact state of the case is, that I have told the truth, and *concealed* the secret.

I have lately taken up the subject of the fisheries in behalf of the right of America, yet this wretch, whoever he is, has thought proper to abuse me for it in the Evening Post. I have published one piece in Messrs. Hall and Seller's paper of June thirty on that subject, in answer to a piece on the same, signed Americanus, and I now republish it in this paper, that every man may judge for himself what sort of a being this unknown Cato must be.

If men, under the hope of being concealed by a printer, are to publish what they dare not own, the public will for ever be held in confusion. British emis-

saries, British prisoners, and disaffected refugees, will embarrass every measure, and endeavor to defame every character, however fair, that stands in their way; and for this reason, were it for no other, I conceive that the name of no writer, in the present state of things, ought to be concealed when demanded.

THOMAS PAINE.

*Pennsylvania Evening Post, July 16, 1779.*

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WILLIAM LEE TO RALPH IZARD.

Frankfort, July 17, 1779.

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This is the state these gentlemen [passengers recently arrived at Amsterdam from Boston] give of Mr. Deane's party in Congress. The Delegates of the four Eastern States (who know him best) in general against him; Pennsylvania divided; Maryland for Deane; Virginia divided; North Carolina for Deane; South Carolina divided; Georgia for Deane. My first short reply to Mr. Deane, sent from hence *via* Holland in February, is arrived in Boston.

*Ford's Letters of William Lee, page 713*

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REPLY TO THOMAS PAINE.

TO MR. PAINE, SIR,—Your anger and threats afford much diversion to those who know your history and character, and though all have not been informed of the part you acted, whilst in the service of Mr. Aitken, as a writer for his magazine, yet all are not ignorant of what it was. Previous, indeed, to your throwing off the tory, and commencing Whig, which was not done by you until some time after the commencement of hostilities, nor until Mr. Aitken had discharged you

from his service on account of your inveterate hatred to every thing produced in favor of the liberty of these states, the world knew little or nothing of you more than they did of your inferior but brother devils, who laboured at the press.

Like a brazen trumpet, by being blown into, you have sounded far and wide; and, like a drum, the more you have been thumped and beaten, the greater noise you have made, until one must suppose you have brought yourself to imagine that you have persuaded the world to think you a person of very great importance, a real Whig, and a man of spirit. Pray, did not your shoulders ache at the recollection of past flagellation, when you threatened the author of Cato, or the printer, with your vengeance? You must conclude the world is extremely ignorant, or very forgetful, when you set forth your own importance, your services, and your character. Suppose you knew the author of the piece signed Cato, what would you do? Order your attorney to prosecute him, as you promised to do in the case of Major Clarkson last winter? Which promise you never performed, or, what is more probable, no attorney could be found that would descend so low as to be concerned for you. Or if you knew the author, would you make him feel the effect of your enraged valor? It is but just that you, who in the course of the last twelve months have published more falsehoods and abusive calumnies than you have written pages, should have credit when you stumbled on the truth; therefore when you take it for granted that Cato meant you, and no other person, you speak the truth. It is impossible that he could mean any other, for there is not a person in the thirteen United States (and for the honor of humanity I hope there is not in the world) to whom the queries, answers, and inuendoes, published by Cato, will so well apply as to yourself. Do you flatter yourself that repetition will convert sophistry into reasoning, or falsehood into truth? You surely must, or you would

not have republished in the Evening Post your miserable performance in Messrs. Hall and Seller's Gazette ; nor again assert the stores obtained out by Mr. Deane were intended as a present, whilst the resolutions of congress (which hon. body must know as much of the matter as yourself) directly contradict you.

Your signing your name at large gives not the least weight to your assertions, whilst the records of congress speak a different language. See their unanimous resolution of Jan. 12th, and their subsequent one of June 5th. You have no right to know, nor will you know the real Cato, until you so far retrieve your lost character (if you really ever had a good one) that it will not be beneath a gentleman to cane you ; at present you are so many degrees below that point, that if you consult the safety of your shoulders or posteriors, you will never attempt to rise from the point you are in, unless you judge both the one and the other sufficiently callous, from repeated applications, to hazard the experiment.

You seem to be fond of the term scoundrel ; take, therefore, my last advice to you—

Go home, thou scoundrel, to thy native soil,  
And in a garret labor, starve, and toil.

A FRIEND TO CATO AND TO TRUTH.

*Pennsylvania Evening Post, July 22, 1779.*

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WHITEHEAD HUMPHREYS TO THOMAS PAINE.

THE galled horse winces.

Thomas, you seem to be in a passion. Has Cato ruffled the smooth surface of your temper ? Who could suppose that you would be wounded by such weapons ? But truth is powerful.

You charge Cato with being a lying incendiary scoundrel. Cato laughs at your rage. Why don't you answer the queries ? Being abusive won't serve



your turn, for the public expect answers ; aye, and satisfactory answers too.

Cato asked you questions, and he asked questions also of one whose abilities and perseverance have acquired the respect of his enemies and the confidence of his friends. That gentleman had a right to expect that he should not have been coupled in the same paper with you ; for though this may have done you honor, it could do him none. He would not have been questioned, if his zeal had not been excited by misrepresentations, and if that ill directed zeal had not been misrepresented. Cato is not infallible ; but he is not a fool, nor does he speak from prejudice or malevolence. That gentleman has answered the queries by his silence ; he was probed, but he did not flinch. Had you been untouched, you also would have been silent ; or, if you did speak, you would have answered not by calumny but by argument.

You have attacked many *innocent men*, and they have given candid answers to your foul charges, or treated you and your charges with equal contempt. These are marks of innocence. Why could you not profit by their example ? But truth is powerful. You affect to believe that nothing in Cato's performance will be credited to your injury, but you shew all the horrors of your own feelings, and disburthen your tortured spirits in the reproachful acclamations of a convict.

You say, "I can but consider myself, and I know I am considered both by friends and enemies, as a principal means in rescuing this country from *imposition and a dangerous species of monopolising*."—That you yourself believe this is possible, because it is possible that you have a greater defect of understanding than of integrity. What your friends believe, it is needless to inquire ; for how far you may have duped them, or how far others may have duped you, is alike indifferent. As to enemies, you may soon convince yourself that you have as few as any man living ; for upon

the closest scrutiny, you will hardly find one quality, either of your heart or your understanding, which, exerted to the utmost, would raise a higher emotion than contempt.

You cannot divert public attention by bringing again before them the threadbare unsupported story of congressional monopolizers. It is as much beneath the public candor to credit these idle tales, as it is beneath the dignity of the public servants to confute them.

We know whence they took their origin, and how you gleaned them up, *the precious crumbs which fell from the rich man's table*. We know the industry used to collect evidence in support of them, and the futile ridiculous ground on which those persons stand who make such charges. We know too the source of the Virginia law, and how the plan was laid for it in Philadelphia, to be revenged on one who would not sacrifice his honor and conscience to support the family compact. You indeed may not be acquainted with these things, for your employers know you too well to trust you. Thus you stand forth a happy instance to shew how a man may avoid a full participation in sin by being a notorious sinner.

Do you think it possible for any one who knows you to read without laughter the last paragraph of your manifesto? Shall I transcribe it? Yes—and you will hardly charge me with slandering you when I say it is yours, for you have signed your name to it; and you will hardly charge me with slandering you when I say (what you yourself have said) that you are the author of all the writing under the signature of Common Sense. And the world will not charge me with slandering you when I say that writings more abusive than those, and a character less fair than that of their author, are not to be found in the circle of existence.

Yes, Thomas, it is your sweet self which says, “if men, under the hope of being concealed by a printer, are to publish what they dare not own, the public will

for ever be held in confusion. British emissaries, British prisoners, and disaffected refugees, *will embarrass every measure, and endeavor to defame every character, however fair, that stands in their way.*" From thy own mouth will I condemn thee. Hast *thou* not endeavored to embarrass every measure, and to defame every character that stood in the way of the enemy? In the way of those who labored in the service of the enemy? In the way of conciliation with Britain? Base conciliation on the odious term of submission, and through the vile channel of low emissaries? Spies! Spies! Highly recommended indeed, and patronized by those whom this country had unwarily trusted. Have not you embarrassed every measure, and defamed every character that stood in the way of a junto, who have endeavored to subject all things to themselves, all power, civil, military, and marine? Who have endeavored to remove every person that would not mingle in their factious views; and to place none in office but their friends, relatives, and dependents, against whose malevolence the unsullied name of the great American patriot was but a slender barrier, whose victim was a W[ashington], and whose idol a L[ee]? Have you not, against the stubborn conviction of your own soul, supported, defended, and extolled this factious junto? Fie on't! Oh, fie!

But you would insinuate that Cato is some British emissary, because he defames the character, *however fair*, of the great, the glorious, magnificent, magnanimous, most monstrous Tom. Had Cato been a British emissary, you would not have need to ask his name. He would early have been announced to you. Aye, and full early would you have found that Cato was *a very civil man*. As civil a man perhaps as Doctor Berkenhout. You, *upon your floor of office*, was master of every *secret*. You are not to learn, therefore, that this Doctor Berkenhout, however protected and supported, and however his errand was excused upon the flimsy pretence of philosophical researches, and how-

ever *civil* he may have been *to you*, was nevertheless *a spy from Britain*; or, if you like the term better, *a British emissary*. Tell us, since you have so excellent a knack of telling *the truth*, while you keep *the secret*—a thing not very difficult for those characters who are not believed, even when they speak the truth—tell us, I say, *the truth* and keep *the secret* of what passed between Doctor Berkenhout and your friends, not yourself, for no man is bound to become a self accuser. Tell *the truth* and keep *the secret* of what passed between Mr. Temp[<sup>l</sup>]e and your friends; and since you know so well, and have so often entertained the world with the supposed debates of a certain assembly, tell *the truth*, but carefully, yea, most carefully *conceal the secrets*, how and by whom these emissaries were defended within the doors. These *are secrets* which must soon be known; these are *truths* which you tremble at.

And is it for you to ask the name of a publisher? Go, wretch, hide thy pitiful head in oblivion. Crawl not from thy den, but with boding bats and the night owl; and when thou present thyself unto the gazing moon, shew her a spectacle of horror. To the whips, the scorpions of guilt, I leave thee. To despair, to shame, to the anguish of contempt, I leave thee. May the balm of repentance sooth thy agonizing soul. Mayest thou soon be forgiven, as thou must soon be forgotten; and when disease and poverty shall overtake thee, and when thou in vain solicitest from thy present coadjutors the poor pittance of misery, mayest thou receive it from their hands whom *thou* hast injured.

CATO.

*Pennsylvania Evening Post, July 24, 1779.*

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PHILADELPHIA COMMITTEE TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, Saturday, July 24, 1779.

A town meeting being to be held on Monday next, the following letter sent to Robert Morris, Esq., en-

closing a report, are published for the consideration of the people previous to the meeting.

Philadelphia, July 21, 1779.

SIR,—We received your favour of June 26th, inclosed in your subsequent letter of July 7th, and likewise saw the same published in Mr. Dunlap's paper of the 5th, and Mr. Bradford's paper of the 14th instant. Our reason for not waiting on you again is assigned by you, partly on account of your indisposition, and partly by the publication itself, because it was not appealing from a report, but prior to a report ; and it was not any part of our intention to have published any report without first presenting you with the whole.

Enclosed is the report we shall make to the town meeting on Monday next, and which we shall publish in the paper of Saturday ; and think it our duty to furnish you with a copy thereof, for your perusal, animadversion, or explanation.

In our conduct in this business we have strictly adhered to facts, and scrupulously followed candour and justice ; and tho' the relation may in some parts appear unpleasant, we hope you will acquit us of exaggeration.

We observe, both in your conversation with us and in your letter of June 26th, and publication of the same date, that you expressed some concern that your name had been so disadvantageously mentioned at the last town meeting. It often happens that those who ought to be the first, are the last persons to hear circumstances respecting themselves.

The cargo in question had created much conversation before any town meeting was thought of. Its remaining so long in the river without any proposals for sale, and a public guard being placed over it, gave rise to many conjectures, among the rest, and which was a very general one, that it was the property of Mr. Silas Deane, and detained by Congress till he should settle his accounts ; and as your connection with Mr. Deane had been known from an account published

by you in February last, the *Idea*, without the assistance of any thing malignant, easily extended to yourself, and perhaps quickened other apprehensions, when it was first given out that you was become a purchaser of the whole ; and however unwilling Mr. Morris may be to acknowledge the term engrossing or monopolizing, yet as he did not import the cargo, and did, in partnership with Mr. Solikoff, get the whole into his possession, we are at a loss to find any other name, tho' the expedition with which he entered on the sale abates the rigorous sense generally applied to these words.

On the part of Mr. Solikoff there is something very nearly akin to forestalling ; for tho' the possessing himself of a promise of the whole cargo was not, as we at first apprehended, before the vessel arrived, it was on, or before, the day on which the cargo became legally merchantable, which we presume takes place as to public sale from the time she is entered with the Naval Officer, which was on the 25th of April.

You mention your having entered, or intended to enter, into treaty for a remaining part of the cargo, which is described by you as unsuited to the season and country. As we have not seen the invoice, and cannot learn, from those who have seen it, what part thereof can properly come under that description, we leave it to Mr. Morris to give what satisfaction he may think proper, either to us or the town meeting, or by any other means he may chuse.

We are persuaded that enquiries of this kind are attended with niceties and difficulties, which would be innovations on the rights and freedom of trade at any other time than this ; but, embarked in a cause which has been in a great measure supported by generously surrendering individual ease and advantage, we are persuaded that Mr. Morris can but approve the principle which the public, and we by their authority, have proceeded on, and to which himself on many occasions has contributed.

As we are not authorized to condemn, so neither can we justify ; and are persuaded that when Mr. Morris reflects on the uneasiness which such a mode of purchasing has occasioned, that he will take measures in future to prevent the same consequences ; for tho', as a merchant, he may be strictly within rules, yet when he considers the many public and honorary stations he has filled, and the times he lives in, he must feel himself somewhat out of character.

If Mr. Morris pleases to convey anything to us in answer to this and the enclosed, we shall deliver it with these at the town meeting, and do every thing in our power to remove uneasiness and restore tranquility and public friendship.

We are, sir, your obedient humble servants,  
 Timothy Matlack,  
 David Rittenhouse,  
 Thomas Paine,  
 Charles Wilson Peale,  
 J. B. Smith.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, July 24, 1779.*

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TO SIMEON DEANE.

Philadelphia, July 27, 1779.

DEAR BROTHER,—I sent you a Dictionary, by Mons. De Francy, which doubt not you have received, but until I have letters from you acknowledging it will make no use of it. We are here in the greatest possible anarchy and confusion. On Saturday night the house of Mr. Humphreys, a respectable citizen, and as true and brave a Whig as any in this State, was forced by the rabble, excited and led on by two of the Committee. He was from home, but returned just after they had entered in search of him. They had knocked down and wounded his Sister, a young lady in the house, and were returning just as he made his way through them into his house. He armed himself, and

stood on his defence, whilst they insulted and abused him, and, to intimidate him, led up a file of Soldiers armed ; but he bravely defied them all unitedly, and without any assistance from the authority of the City or his neighbors dispersed them. This daring outrage, though not the greatest that has been committed here, has alarmed the citizens ; and yesterday there was a Town Meeting, at which the Committee found themselves greatly embarrassed and were severely censured. Mr. R. Morris was acquitted of every charge, and greatly applauded. This indeed looks favorable ; but its meeting stands adjourned until this morning, and the proceedings of this day will shew what will probably be the event. The contest is between the respectable citizens of fortune and character, opposed to the constitution of this State, and people in lower circumstances and reputation, headed by leaders well qualified for their business, and supposed to be secretly supported by the Press and Council. However things may end, it may at this instant be truly said, there are few unhappier cities on the globe than Philadelphia, the reverse of its name, in its present character, which I hope will not be its situation for any time.

It is a melancholy reflection to think, that whilst our common enemy is wasting our sea coasts, and laying our fairest and most peaceable towns in ashes, we are quarrelling among ourselves, and can scarcely be constrained from plunging our swords in each others bosoms. Fairfield, Norwalk, and the country between them, are plundered and burnt to almost the last house by the enemy ; New Haven was plundered and the stores on the wharf burned, and many houses in East Haven. The individual acts of barbarity you must suppose many and atrocious ; they are so, almost beyond description or example. The enemy have evacuated the State ; the surprise of their garrison at Stoney Point was a most gallant affair and conducted in some degree to make them retire from Connecticut. Lord Cornwallis is arrived at New York with some recruits,



and it is given out that Admiral Arbuthnot may be daily expected with a large reinforcement. I doubt it, though our friends in France write positively on the subject. He must have sailed in May, which induces me to think his destination changed, and that his being bound to America was given out rather as a blind. I send you two letters from Mr. Limozin which I opened, impatient for news from France, from whence I received nothing by letter. Pray write me your situation and what you have suffered, also how the Land Office goes on. I send you part of two papers by which you will see how Payne is handled; there are two more still severer, but I have them not by me at this time. The verses merit preserving.

Our brother B. D. is gone to Boston; he has been successful in privateering lately, in the Mars particularly.

I am, my dear brother, most affectionately yours,

S. DEANE.

*Ford's Correspondence of Samuel B. Webb, II., 185.*

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#### STATEMENT OF CHARLES WILSON PEALE.

MR. DUNLAP,—Please to publish the following letter of Mr. Deane to Capt. Peale, which was left with him by Silas Deane, John Nixon, and James Wilson, Esquires, together with my answer to their demand.

THOMAS PAINE.

Philadelphia, July 27, 1779.

Mr. Peale.

SIR,—You declared yesterday, to the citizens met at the coffee-house, that a bribe or salary had been offered Mr. Thomas Paine, to engage him not to write or publish any thing respecting me or my affairs. As such an assertion must tend to prejudice my character and conduct with my countrymen and fellow-citizens, I now call on you for the name of the person or persons who

made this offer to Mr. Paine. Justice to the Public, as well as to my character, requires that their names should be known, and authorizes me to make this demand of you.

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,  
Mr. Peale. SILAS DEANE.

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Market Street, July 28, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,—Capt. Peale having this morning shown me the above letter, and named the gentlemen who accompanied Mr. Deane, and as the matter relates particularly to me, I have to reply, that as I was not present at the Coffee-house at the time to which Mr. Deane refers, I cannot be a judge of what particular conversation passed; but if anything there spoken referred to an offer made to me last winter, which for sundry reasons I thought it my duty to decline, I shall, in justice to Capt. Peale as a friend, as well as for the satisfaction of the public, publish in next Saturday's paper the whole transactions respecting the offer in question.

I would likewise observe that I was coming down Market street at the time Mr. Deane, Mr. Nixon, and Mr. Wilson were standing at Capt. Peale's door; and as some of them saw me, they might have had the satisfaction from me which they required, had they waited till I came up, which was within a few minutes of their going away.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient humble servant,  
THOMAS PAINE.

Silas Deane, )  
John Nixon,    }  
James Wilson, ) Esquires.

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Philadelphia, July 28, 1779.

Mr. Deane.

SIR,—Mr. Paine has been grossly abused in a public paper by an anonymous author whose name

had been concealed, and believing Mr. Paine to be a firm friend to America, and my personal acquaintance with him gives me an opportunity of knowing that he has done more for our common cause than the world, who had only seen his publications, could know, I thought it my duty to support him, and gave to the public the intimation which you mention in your letter.

That letter I have put into the hands of Mr. Paine, and he will publish the whole of the transaction, by which means you as well as the public will obtain in due time the fullest information.

I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

CHARLES WILSON PEALE.

To Silas Deane, Esq.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, July 29, 1779.*

#### DENIAL BY ARTHUR LEE.

To the Printer at Poughkeepsie.

In justice to the character of an accused absent man, the printers of news-papers in this and the neighbouring States are requested to publish the following translation of a letter, written to the Editor of the Leyden Gazette, dated at Paris the 8th of February last, by Arthur Lee, Esq., upon his seeing Mr. Deane's publication of the 5th of December.

A\*

Fish-kill, 29th July, 1779.

Doctor Lee's Letter to the Printer, published in the Supplement, Aux Nouvelles extraordinaires de divers Endroits du numero XVI. De Leide le Fevrier, 1779.

Upon the subject of the letter which has appeared under the signature of Silas Deane, I pray you, Sir, to

\* Samuel Adams to Arthur Lee. "Your letter to the editor of the Leyden Gazette, written upon your seeing Mr. Deane's first publication, fell into my hands about a fortnight ago. I published it with a few loose observations in one of our newspapers."—*Wells' Life of Samuel Adams*, III., 61. The denial was printed with some verbal changes from the above in the Connecticut Gazette of July 28, 1779.

give the following answer to the public. That I declare in the most solemn manner that all the accusations which it contains against me are absolutely false. The particular detail of proofs which demonstrate not only that the accusations are false and scandalous, but also that the accuser has, with the most perfect reason and justice, lost the confidence of the public, is due to the Representatives of the people of the United States assembled in Congress, of whom I am the servant; and this detail I cannot give without their permission. In the mean time I assure myself that a clear and positive denial will be received by every honest and impartial person as a sufficient answer to simple accusations, manifestly dictated by the spleen of a disgraced man.

[Signed]

ARTHUR LEE.

*The New York Journal, August 9, 1779.*

#### THOMAS PAINE'S EXPLANATION.

MR. DUNLAP,—Please to insert the following.

T. P.

Silas Deane, John Nixon, and James Wilson, Esquires, having called on Capt. Peale, and left with him a letter signed Silas Deane, dated the 27th instant, respecting intimations used by him, Capt. Peale, at the Coffee-house, on the morning of the 26th instant, relative to some pecuniary offers made to me; and Capt. Peale having shewn me that letter, which, together with my and his answer thereto, were published in the Pennsylvania Packet of Thursday last, in which answer of mine I engaged to give the information required in this day's paper.

On examining Mr. Deane's letter a second time, I see the request is for the *name* or *names* only, and not for circumstances of the affair in question. To give the one without the other might be made an ill use of, and to give both in the present situation of things,

without first referring the matter to Congress, might, as far as I am able to foresee, produce considerable inconvenience.

So far as respects the three gentlemen in question, I shall give such answers as ought to suffice them, and that part which may be supposed to belong more generally to the public, I entreat them to leave to my discretion. Had there been no peculiar nicety in this affair, I undoubtedly should for my own sake have published it before now, because in any light in which it may be viewed, it will add to my reputation.

Therefore, it is sufficient on my part that I declined the offer; and it is sufficient to Mr. Nixon and Mr. Wilson that they were not the persons who made it, or, I believe, knew anything about; and on the part of Mr. Deane it is somewhat extraordinary that he should stir about *this only*, who has taken everything else so quietly. It is likewise more extraordinary that he should stir at *this* particular time, because I cannot suppose he is ignorant of a letter of mine to Congress, dated so long ago as the 23d of April, where I mentioned the same affair to which, I presume, Capt. Peale alluded; and I gave my consent that Mr. Thomson should shew Mr. Deane that letter, upon condition that he does not commence a quarrel with Mr. Carmichael for dubbing him at Nantz with the title of a —.

After informing Congress that an offer had been made to me, I added "that however polite the proposal might be, or however friendly it might be designed, I thought it my duty to decline it, as it was accompanied with a condition which had a tendency to prevent the information I had since given and should still give on public affairs." The offer was made both before and after I made my resignation on the 8th of January. It was first put in general terms, afterwards in particular ones; was pressed on me with a great deal of anxiety, and amounted to more than twice my salary in Congress.

I cannot possess myself of the mind of the gentleman who proposed it, so as to declare what every intention of his might be, but I well know that the acceptance of it would at that time as effectually have prevented the publication I gave in Mr. Dunlap's paper of the 16th of February, respecting the supplies and the loss of the dispatches, as if my silence had been made the express condition of my acceptance.

Having said thus much, I think it a prudent step in me to refer the affair first to Congress. If they please to call on me for particulars, I will furnish them; and I am persuaded the honest and well wishing part of the public will rest satisfied with this, as there are matters connected with it which might, either by mistake or design, be made a very ill use of.

There is not a man in the Thirteen States, so far as his powers and abilities extend, that will go further or do more in supporting the cause of America than myself, or of any country connected with her. This every one knows who has any intimate acquaintance with me; and according to my opinion of things and principles, a man needs no pecuniary inducement to do that to which the two-fold powers of duty and disposition naturally lead him on.

Having thus far satisfied Mr. Nixon and Mr. Wilson, I take the liberty of asking Mr. Wilson if he is or was not directly or indirectly a partner in the Foreign Commercial Company, in which Mr. Deane, with several members of Congress at that time, and others were concerned.

And exclusive of all other questions to Mr. Deane, I desire him to inform the public for what purpose it was that he remitted over to Mr. Samuel Wharton of London 19,520 livres, eleven days after the Treaty of Alliance was signed. I presume he will not undertake to contradict the fact; if he does, I can prove it.

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. As to Whitehead Humphreys, I give him my full and free consent to publish whatever and when-

ever he pleases, and under any signature he likes best ; promising on my part to make no reply thereto, if he, Whitehead Humphreys, will to each of his future pieces add at the bottom the following words, viz.:

“This is published by the same person who inserted several libellous productions under the signature of ‘Cato,’ in Benjamin Towne’s Evening Post of July, 1779, which were so infamously false that the author or carrier of them, in order to avoid the shame and scandal of being known, tied the Printer down to such strong obligations to conceal him, that nothing but a halter could extort it from him.”

Philadelphia, July 30, 1779.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, July 31, 1779.*

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#### JUNIOUS ON THOMAS PAINE.

For the Pennsylvania Packet.

It is long since my mind has been made up on Mr. Paine. I never thought so contemptibly of the literary fame of Pennsylvanians as to suppose that the palm of learning was to be bestowed on him, or that he was to triumph over all the energetic plans that have often been displayed in the present contest on behalf of our country. Since his late publications against Mr. Deane, I firmly believed that in the arts of sophistry and quibble few, if any, could equal him, and had got myself into that strain of ideas of him, that I conceived no falsehood, however palpable, beneath his acceptance, and no character, however illustrious, above his daring calumny. Convinced of this, I remained silent, satisfied that the pit he dug for others, must at last close on himself, and that after the glare of a passing meteor had been his, he would sink again into primæval insignificance. As far as events have yet unfolded his roll, my opinion stands justified, and humanity now bids me pity, that stumbling on the brink of popular

odium, he sees not how near he approaches to where he imagines he is leading others.

Already, countrymen, he stands denied by Congress as a writer of untruths ; by citizens of eminence and worth as a calumniator and tool of a faction opposed to the liberties and independence of their country ; and exposed to all of you, as wishing to make you parties in his quarrels, and that your exertions should in his defence cause to flow a torrent from the veins of your best citizens, which himself has neither the courage nor presumption to attempt to draw.

Permit me, fellow citizens, wherever you are, in your remotest settlements, I call on you, Pennsylvanians, to bear testimony to that noble spirit which dignifies our brethren in the capital, whilst I disclose to you those daring attempts which may not have reached you, as they were transacted here, and which their constancy and virtue overcame. A reputable spirited citizen of this place, by name Whitehead Humphreys, —no Tory—but a man who had accompanied your arms to battle, and conscious of the dignity of the office, had gloried in defending your rights and liberties when attacked from distant shores. This man thinking Mr. Paine what Congress, many eminent citizens, &c., had long since thought him, viz., a disturber of the public peace, a spreader of falsehoods, and sower of dissension among the people, had carried to the press some performances for your information, submitting them and Mr. Paine to your judgment ; for so doing he was called to the Coffee house, and there arraigned before a respectable number of citizens. For what ? For having retaliated on Mr. Paine his own indecent productions, and for having tried to convince you of the baseness of his designs. All the pieces he had carried to Mr. Towne were read before them, and unbounded rage was expected to follow, to the utter destruction of this, your fellow-countryman—When lo—Select a bright page in the annals of fame to record the story. That virtue which



was ever yours, when opposing tyranny, flew to his aid, and the freedom of the press was decreed what it really is, the palladium of your rights and great basis of your liberty and independence. Shall I recount to you the arts made use of to avert this decision? It was offered to vote, whether Mr. Paine was a friend to America; if he was, W. Humphreys was so, too, and therefore on a par with him. It was said Mr. Paine was a public man; if true, are public trusts sanctions from attacks from the press? If they were, how often has Mr. Paine violated the rights of public men, by indiscriminately attacking them?

It was said that Mr. Paine had been offered a bribe to desist writing against Mr. Deane. If this was true (which I do not believe), the friends of Mr. Paine strove to get W. Humphreys put to death for writing against him. And if money was offered in one case, death was threatened in the other; and which was most deterring, I leave you to judge. If Mr. Deane was anxious, Mr. Paine was tortured with apprehensions of Humphrey's pen, and here at last the matter stands even; but in this day's paper is the performance solemnly announced to you as elucidating the affair of the bribe, and in the name of Liberty, what does it amount to? A connected series of sophistical evasions, which your own good sense must find out, bears neither the marks of candor or ingenuity. I will spend a few moments in examining them. On examining Mr. Deane's letters, he finds that Mr. Deane requests the names of the party, not the circumstances, of the offer of the bribe. Now how could Mr. Paine possibly give the one without the other? and does not common sense point out, that if Mr. Paine had said, "Mr. — made the offer," the name and circumstance were already told, and without saying this he could not give up the name, for putting a name on blank paper without any else, would not do it. He writes to refer the matter to Congress, and why so? It appears Congress were informed in his letter of April last,

and they have never noticed the matter yet ; still it must be referred to them. But how is this to be done ? Will Mr. Paine stoop to wait on them again ? No. The united Representatives of America in Congress assembled, must call on him. He says, if Congress please to call on me for particulars, I will furnish them. Is this sufferable ? Must our country, thus collected, bend to him, or he to them ? Whether Mr. Wilson was concerned in a Commercial Company, or Mr. Deane in sending money to England, what had all this to do with the case in point ? A great deal. For it is thrown out to divert your attention from it. Mr. Paine says he stands acquitted at all events, for he refused the bribe. Well he might refuse it, for its not being enough for aught we know, and how then does he stand acquitted ? Let us try then if we cannot see further into this matter. Perhaps a gentleman knowing Mr. Paine's profession to be that of a writer, might offer him a salary to hand his history embellished to posterity ; if that interfered with Mr. Paine's communicating intelligence to the public, that gentleman might know nothing of it, and this Mr. Paine acknowledges. Suppose a ship-carpenter employed in building a public vessel ; is that to bar every man from applying to him to build a private one, or is the offer to be construed into a wish of his desisting to build the public one ? Surely not ; he might be able to build them both ; perhaps the public might not be in haste with theirs ; perhaps a thousand things might occur to make his compliance with private views not inconsistent with the public weal.

But the man who thus equivocates, be assured has nought to tell. Mr. Paine is no self-denyer ; he has been lavish of public secrets, and I dare say is not over careful in concealing his own. This is apparent ; for if it was improper the public should know all of this matter, it was equally so they should know any thing of it, unless, indeed, he meant by insinuation to foment jealousies, destructive of your peace and hap-

piness, which really, from his writings, appears to be his intentions. Do you think it unlikely, fathers and countrymen, that the British foe may have pensioned a man like this to raise distrusts against those men who have fought them bravely in the field, and baffled them in council, for interest is a leading principle, and what could advance theirs more than this? By such a man they sap all public confidence, sow discord between the States in union, between us and our allies, thereby involving us eventually in one common ruin, in which he could lose nothing, having nought at stake. I do not say this is his case, because I do not know it; but I say it is probable, and he who so freely suspects others must in his turn pardon suspicions.

Heartily congratulating you, my fellow-citizens, for your zeal and firmness in support of liberty, you may be assured you will soon reap its effects; by supporting liberty at *home*, you will secure it from *abroad*, and remain that happy soil (destined the happiest 'neath the cope of Heaven) where tyranny is equally hated and resisted, whether it flow from a king, Lord and Commons, or from intestine foes. To latest ages may you remain, as you deserve to be, the envy and the glory of surrounding climes. JUNIUS.

Saturday, July 31st, 1779.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, Aug. 3, 1779.*

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#### ANSWER OF ROBERT MORRIS TO THE PHILADELPHIA COMMITTEE.

To the PUBLIC.

In Mr. Dunlap's paper of Saturday, the 24th of July, is published a letter signed T. Matlack, David Rittenhouse, Thomas Paine, Charles Wilson Peale, and J. B. Smith, together with their report on the transactions relating to the cargo of the polacre Victorious. I received these papers at noon the 22d July, and immediately wrote an answer; as I was going out of town, I

left it with one of my Clerks to copy, and deliver to some one of the Committee. He tells me, that having called several times on Mr. Matlack, and not finding him at home, he had no opportunity to deliver the letter until Saturday morning, which I mention in justice to the Committee, as by this accident they had not an opportunity of sending my letter to the press. I suppose it would have been read at the Town Meeting, on Monday the 26th, had their report been taken up. But it was agreed that this was unnecessary, in which I acquiesced, considering it as an acknowledgment on the part of the Committee that my conduct was not reprehensible.

When a report of the General Committee was read, on the subject of Mr. Holker's affairs, which is also published in Mr. Dunlap's paper of the 24th, I could not refrain from saying a few words in justification of that gentleman and of myself. I gratefully acknowledge the patience with which I was heard by my fellow-citizens, until my sensibility was so strongly affected by their repeated plaudits, that I could not give utterance to what I had intended to say further on that subject.

A gentleman present made a motion for approving my conduct, but put the question himself, which ought to have been done by the Chairman; the Chairman did not repeat it, and therefore (from this irregularity), although I have the pleasure to say that the approbation of my conduct was almost, if not altogether unanimous, the vote taken upon the occasion has not appeared among the resolutions of the Meeting signed by the Chairman.

It would be tedious, and perhaps unnecessary, on this occasion, to go through the arguments which might be urged on the matter in question, relative to Mr. Holker and myself. I am confident that a full investigation of the transaction will rebound much to our advantage, and I shall therefore only repeat the declaration I made upon my word and honor to my fellow citizens in the

State-house Yard, that I was not myself, neither was Mr. Holker, to the best of my knowledge and belief, either directly or indirectly, concerned in exporting from this Continent, since the embargo took place, a single barrel of provisions, except on account of His Most Christian Majesty, for the use of his seamen and troops.

Had the letter and report first mentioned been confined to this city, or the question on my conduct been regularly put, I should not have given the reader this trouble ; but as the former is published, and the latter is not *published*, it became my duty to relate what had passed, and to subjoin the letter I wrote to the Committee, as they had not an opportunity of sending it to the world with their own, for the reasons before mentioned. It is in these words :

Philadelphia, July 22, 1779.

GENTLEMEN,—I was honoured with the receipt of your letter of the 21st this day at noon, and take the earliest opportunity of replying to it. I beg leave to make my acknowledgments for the assurances you give of your intentions to remove uneasiness and restore tranquility and public friendship, and trust that efforts to this purpose will meet the applause of every friend to our country. Permit me to testify the pleasure I feel from your professions of candour, a virtue which, as it is necessary, so is it to be expected in those who have been entrusted by our fellow-citizens to make that enquiry, which, as you well observe, might at any other time be deemed an innovation on the rights and freedom of trade. Relying on that candour I shall study the greatest brevity, that I may not give you or them unnecessary trouble.

I am satisfied in my own particular that the enquiry has been made, as I hold myself ready to answer every investigation. At the same time it may perhaps be worthy of consideration how far, in times differing from the present, innovations upon the freedom and

rights of mankind may be sanctioned by those acts, which I again repeat to you I do not regret so far as my conduct is concerned. It was not my intention to appeal in the publications you allude to, either from or prior to your report ; my reasons for publishing are fairly stated, and the thing itself was indispensable. I need not take any notice of the conjecture formed of Mr. Deane having property in this cargo, as I am confident that you, Gentlemen, are convinced they were ill founded. I cannot help differing from you in opinion that the transactions in question have any thing in them of engrossing or monopolizing. I may not be a judge of the legal sense affixed to these terms, but in reason and common sense they seem to mean the purchasing a large quantity of any commodity, and keeping possession of it until the consequent scarcity enables the holder to extort from the public or private necessities an unreasonable profit ; and this I am told is the legal signification. But it will be admitted on all hands that I made as speedy sale as possible ; consequently, when the variety of the commodities of which this cargo was composed is considered, and that many of them were unsaleable, I must appear, what I really think I was, the fair and open Merchant, who by contributing to the immediate purchase encouraged the foreign commerce, and by expeditious sales, with moderate profits, supplied the necessities of my fellow citizens on the most reasonable terms in my power. I have said above that many of these commodities were unsaleable, and in my former letter that they were unsuited to the season and climate. You seem to call for some explanation of these things. It is needless to enumerate the articles, and the shortest explanation is this, that these articles have been constantly exposed to sale from the first opening until this time ; they still remain, and I shall be much obliged to any person who will become the purchaser of them. You will pardon me, Gentlemen, for differing from you in one sentiment, " That I must feel myself out of character, though

strictly within rules as a Merchant, when I consider the stations I have held, and the times in which I live." Thoroughly despising those pedling tricks which have latterly been practised and are frequently adduced to disgrace trade and traders, I declare that the character of a real merchant, a generous, open and honest merchant, is a character I am proud of. It is the profession to which I have been bred from my earliest youth ; the station in which it has pleased God to place me ; and if I have acted as consistently in every other station, I may look back with pleasure. If I have otherwise erred in my conduct, it has been because the line in which I moved as a merchant, precluded me from the study of those subjects which are necessary for political life.

Since you have been pleased to furnish me with a copy of your intended report for "perusal, animadversion or explanation," you will doubtless excuse a few short observations on it. The double species of engrossing you mention, 1st, of the promise, and 2dly, of the cargo, I cannot easily comprehend. The engrossing of promises would be but a bad speculation in these days, nor would any man be envied for having a large stock of such commodities as promises are generally experienced to be. If Mr. Sollikoff's offers for the cargo had been rightly understood they would not have been accepted ; it would have been disposed of otherwise ; and of course the promise he obtained would have been of no benefit to him or injury to any body else, had his bargain been valid. I think I have clearly shewn the cargo was not engrossed, but fairly purchased, and immediately offered for sale at a moderate profit. This promise was obtained by Mr. Sollikoff before his application to me, and of course if there were anything blameable in it, I must be clear, and still more so when it is considered that I limited my concern in the purchase to a price then generally deemed moderate, and which the supercargoes refused when they came to understand it. For all which re-

lates to the Commercial Committee of Congress, I have to observe that as I knew nothing of any treaties between them and the owners of the cargo in question, I am neither chargeable with keeping it out of their hands or trifling with them. And for any profit which was *unnecessarily* to be made out of the public, I say that had the Commercial Committee purchased the whole cargo on the best terms that could then have been made, and taken out the articles wanted for the public service at the price I sold them, they would have lost more on the sales of the remainder than was gained as a profit on the sales of these articles to them. If this state of the case be just, and really believe it is, the public made a profit by me, instead of paying one to me. That I offered these goods to the Agents, rather than to the Commercial Committee, was purely because I was ignorant the Committee made such purchases; and the more so, as I had once the honor of being a member when such purchases were not made by them, but by the Agents, and therefore not being acquainted with any change in the mode of proceeding, thought I was pursuing the true line. There is a small mistake in your report, which I doubt not you will readily perceive. You say that I gave as a reason why the owner found me a convenient purchaser that I could furnish tobacco, &c.; but you will recollect that my transaction at that period was not with the owners, but with Mr. Sollikoff, who found me to be a convenient person to be concerned with him because I had tobacco. A small alteration of this kind will give a different face to the relation, and render the remarks which the Committee have made upon it unnecessary.

Having thus hastily gone through your letter and report, I trust, Gentlemen, that all defects will be supplied by your candour and love of justice. These, with the firm reliance I have upon my fellow-citizens, and the consciousness of the rectitude of my intentions, form the most solid ground to expect that those



who may be empowered to acquit or condemn, will honor me with their acquittal, whenever the question shall be fairly and impartially put.

I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, your most obedient and very humble servant,

ROBERT MORRIS.

To Timothy Matlack, David Rittenhouse, Thomas Paine, Charles Wilson Peale, J. B. Smith, Esquires.

I regret it as a great misfortune that I have been so often forced to claim the public attention to vindicate my own character and conduct. I wish to live a quiet private life, under the protection of good laws wisely administered; and notwithstanding the pain I have suffered from the attacks unjustly made upon me, I have been much more concerned from public considerations at the many publications of this sort which have appeared. For ill founded accusations tend not only to destroy the confidence absolutely necessary for the conduct of our affairs, but they weaken the effect of those which may at any time be made with justice and truth.

ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, July 31, 1779.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, Aug. 5, 1779.*

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JAMES LOVELL TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

August 3d [1779].

OTHER Packets than what I have mentioned in my last have arrived, so that I can keep by me several papers belonging to you and not rob you or give you trouble to copy. I want R. H. Lee and you and myself to have a set of essential vouchers. Send me, therefore, what you have to spare, and call on me for what you wish to possess relative to disputable facts interesting to the reputation of any of our public friends or foes; for of both sorts have our officers *been*. You will see Mr. John Adams before I shall.—R. Izard

complains of brutish treatment in the manner and air of Franklin's refusal of a draught for Izard's support, which Arthur Lee and John Adams thereupon paid.

F[ranklin] has sent me a very long *private* letter dated July 22d, 1778, forwarded Feb. 25, 1779, and reaching me July 27th; it is in answer to mine of May 25, 1778, and probably fabricated after Deane's publication appeared in Europe.

I rejoice at the spirit of money-lending and tax-paying in your quarter; the third spirit is rightly placed in the rear. It was not calculated for a *leader*.

I have marked with a X what papers I have of yours. I have also by another way the paper inclosed in Sept. 12th.

I have received your favor of July 19th by Express, and the Gazettes inclosed, with two lines July 22d; hope to be able by Mr. McLane to say something of the conduct in Chestnut street, and at the corner of Front and Chestnut as well, as about my ruining family. I begin to grow most seriously allarmed on account of them. Calculation shows me that I must not go decently clad or they must not be fed. Nay, both I and they naked, meat, drink and house rent are beyond my income. It seems to me that the vexations of a seat in Congress are now known and avoided. Pray look out seasonably for Men willing to do the work as well as to accept the honor of an election, and for our country's sake, I pray they may not only be willing to work, but work *faithfully*. All is done that could be accomplished concerning the existence of Marblehead, Cape Ann, &c., and enough is done for an *honest*, able Negotiator to proceed upon. We have no authentic accounts of what the Gazette of this Morning mentions respecting Prussia; but I think it by no means improbable from what foundation A. Lee laid and William was prepared to continue.

Let me hear from you as often as may be.

With much Regard, your Friend and humble Servt.,

J. L[OVELL].

I have kept Jan. 9, Feb. 3, Mar. 6, A. Lee's, and Mar. 13th, Gridley's.

[Enclosure.]

Deane owns he got his recall the 4th of March, yet he imposed himself on the public so as to be presented on the 20th. He disposed of public money to others and took largely of it himself.

March 15, assignation of Mr. Deane to Jas. Barnet .....	250
d° 17, to B. Nicholson .....	240
d° 25 & 27, to H. Johnston & I All..	1,400
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d° 17, on Receipt to S. D.....	4,800
24, d° to S. D.....	2,400
30, p <sup>d</sup> down on Rect. to S. D.....	26,715
30, p <sup>d</sup> on Rect. to S. D.....	4,800
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Thus Mr. Deane, no longer a Commissioner, takes out of public treasure entrusted to the Commissioners only, in the space of 13 days, 38,718 livres. But the Banker, Mr. J. Adams, and young Mr. Franklin can testify that house rent, furniture, carriage, and even his servants' wages have been paid since out of the public money. The expenses of his voyage were defrayed by his most Christian Majesty.

Mr. Deane *concealed* his recall from his colleagues, says Arthur Lee; but I am not convinced by the proof he gives.

COPY OF A. LEE'S LETTER TO THE HON. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

March 13, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I have been told that there is news of Congress having recalled one of us from this Court. If any intelligence has been received of it at Passy, I beg the favor of its being communicated to me.

I have the honor to be, &c.

## THE ANSWER.

Passy, March 13, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I have been told that some passengers, landed at Orient from an American ship, report that Mr. Adams is coming out to replace Mr. Deane ; but I have received no advice of that kind from Congress, and I suppose that, if true, he will bring their orders with him.

I have the Honor to be, &amp;c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

*I from Congress, there is perhaps cunning in this. Arthur Lee says as to my being at once "joint Commissioner at the Court of Versailles and sole Commissioner at the Court of Madrid," it is a wilfull and shameless perversion of truth for as shameful a purpose—that of deceiving the public and caluniating their absent servant. I have seen Mr. Deane read my Commission more than once—"Provided always that the said Arthur Lee shall continue to be possessed of all the Powers heretofore given him as a Commissioner at the Court of France, so long as he shall remain in and be present at the said Court." This wise and economical Measure of Congress excited infinitely Mr. Deane's spleen, because either in his misconception or misrepresentation it showed an extraordinary confidence in the man he hated and whose ruin he meditated.*

Mr. Deane published on the 5th of Dec., 1778 ; on the 14th of Sept. preceeding, Doctor Franklin had been chosen Minister Plenipotentiary here, and consequently I was no more a "Commissioner at the Court of Versailles." Was Mr. Deane in Philadelphia ignorant of this ? He asserted that on the 5th of Dec., which he knew to be untrue ; and this with the worst and basest of all purposes—the imposing upon the people to induce them to censure Congress and myself unjustly.

Mr. Deane informs the public that unfortunately

for them I gave universal disgust to the nation whose assistance we solicited. He had taken the business of the Commissioners so much to himself that not one in a million knew that I was a Commissioner; not one in a hundred of the letters from the different parts of the Kingdom bore my name. See the fact and the reason from Messrs. Delaps of Bourdeau. Jan. 3d, 1778, "We wrote several letters addressed to your direction, to which we received answers only from Messrs. Franklin and Deane, which gave us room to imagine you were absent, in consequence of which, we replied only to them gentlemen." Neither these letters nor answers in general were communicated to me. There could not be a thing more notorious than that I associated with and cultivated the French people ten times more than Mr. Deane.

I am *forced* to give a single week's engagements to dine. *Thursday*, Monsr. Turgot; *Friday*, Count Sarsfield; *Saturday*, Count Welsh; *Sunday*, Prince Tingry; *Monday*, Dutchess D'Anville; *Tuesday*, Mr. de Sartine; *Thursday*, Marschal Duke de Mouchy; *Saturday*, Duke D'Aien. I did not, it is true, strive to have my Name trumpeted at the Coffee houses by the gift of recommendatory letters, which were counted as contracts binding on Congress, which I had it from Count de Vergennes himself that he disapproved of.—See Mr. Boux's complaints, No. XXII. Congress know the Money and disquiet these ill judged and presumptuous proceedings cost.

*Bancroft Mss., Lenox Library.*

#### PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

*Philadelphia, Friday, August 6, 1779. Resolved,* That the several Commissioners, Commercial agents, and others in Europe, entrusted with public money, be directed to transmit, without delay, their accounts and vouchers, and also triplicate copies of the same to the Board of Treasury of these United States in order for settlement.

*Resolved*, That a suitable person be appointed by Congress to examine the said accounts in Europe, and certify his opinion thereon previous to their being transmitted.

*Resolved*, That the Board of Treasury be directed to report for Mr. Deane a reasonable allowance for his time and expences from the expiration of three months after the notice of his recall to the present time.

A motion was made by Mr. Samuel Hartington, seconded by Mr. John Fell,

That the honorable Silas Deane, Esquire, late one of the Commissioners at the Court of Versailles, and political and commercial agent, be excused from any further attendance on Congress, in order that he may settle his accounts without delay, agreeable to the foregoing resolution.

A motion was made by Mr. Henry Marchant, seconded by Mr. Thomas McKean, to amend the motion by striking out the words "in order," &c., to the end.

*Question*, Shall those words stand? Passed in the negative.

A motion was made by Mr. Merewether Smith, seconded by Mr. Samuel Holton, to amend farther by striking out "excused," and in lieu thereof inserting "discharged."

Question put, resolved in the affirmative.

So it was resolved, that the honorable Silas Deane, Esquire, late one of the Commissioners at the Court of Versailles, and political and commercial agent, be discharged from any further attendance on Congress.

*Journals of Congress.*

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JAMES LOVELL TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, Aug. 6, 1779.

(Private.)

HONOURABLE SIR,—Your favor of July 22d, 1778, forwarded from Nantes by Mr. Williams the 25th of Feb.

this year, arrived here not 'till the 31st of July. I wonder the more that so very few of your letters reach Philadelphia in the course of a year, as Mr. Dumas finds means to convey a series above the number of the alphabet in the same term of time, and is also, in continual correspondence with you.

It is needless, at this season, to take up the different parts of your long letters, for which, however, I feel myself much obliged to you. But, I cannot omit to notice that you are totally mistaken as to "partial objections" having been before Congress at the time of their dissent to the 11th and 12th Articles. It is true that, since that period, much has been read from the persons you suppose to have written on that subject.

You will long ere now have seen the use which has been made of my letter to you respecting Mr. Deane's recall. I at least made a show of a disposition to befriend him. I really had such a disposition, and, early on his arrival, let him know what had grounded that proceeding in Congress, in hope that he would not be driven by a false jealousy, which he discovered, so far as to suffer wreck upon the quick sands of indiscretion. All my aim was in vain; he has been borne headlong. His publication of Dec. 5th has, in my opinion, totally ruined his claims to any public trust on account of his hability in affairs; and however you may not discover the great malignity of his innuendoes, you cannot but see and own that his peice contains downright lies, which must be pointed out to the public, who have not yet your good grounds for conviction. There is not a single circumstance mentioned against Mr. Lee which is supported, except his not having the confidence of the French Court. The Ministers must have been angels of light not to have conceived prejudices in consequence of the indefatigable acts of one who thought himself *saddled* when a colleague of sense, honor, and integrity was given to him by Congress. The Ministry were mis-

led ; but the consequence does not follow that therefore Congress should destroy an able and faithful servant. What slippery ground would this make for our Ministers abroad? Will there not probably be ambitious men always in Congress to trip them? But I drop the disagreeable subject and go to the pleasing office of assuring you of the attachment with which I am, Honorable Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JAMES LOVELL.

Hon. Doctor B. Franklin.

*Holbrooke Mss.*

JAMES LOVELL TO ARTHUR LEE.

(Private.)

Philadelphia, Aug. 6th, 1779.

DEAR SIR,—The Originals, duplicates, *or* triplicates of all you wish to have reached us, I believe, have safely arrived, and you may depend on a diligent use of them. It was unfortunate that we were not favored with many of them before Henry Francis and S. Adams left this Stage of their Exertions for their country and for virtue in general. However, I shall think this circumstance a fresh Call upon *my industry*, a quality which is an object of the hatred of *your* foes, who have found themselves long ago mine in consequence. I own no first in that quality except Mr. Laurens, who wants no spur but the simple knowledge of injuries done to the worthy to make him enter directly upon their defence.

I have urged an hundred times what you have at length quoted to me from Whitlock. But there is really no such thing as a Committee of Foreign Affairs existing—no secretary or clerk—further than that I persevere to be one and the other. The books and papers of that extinguished body lay yet on the table



of Congress, or rather are locked up in the Secretary's private box.

There was a motion, as I have before told you, to chuse a *new* Committee; the House would not so insult me. An indifference then took place as to *filling it up* upon presumption. I suppose that a little leaven leaventh the whole lump. It would be impossible that you could have enemies in a Committee where was one so to arrange vouchers of your industry, capacity, and honor, as it is thought I am able to do.

The state of Mr. D[eane] is exactly the reverse of what letters have announced in France; but I will give you one or two copies of the scraps which have been made use of here to prove the only point on which your enemies finally rested, and which is now the only possible ground of hope to them of overcoming your views for the public good.

Nothing has appeared here that will *prove a direct* patronage and assistance of your inveterate foe from that quarter which you name in one of your letters to Frank or Richard; but every thing short of that has taken place. You will not think I am a meer "*Innuendo-Man*," as R. H. calls D[eane], after you get the copies above mentioned.

How do you reconcile the conduct of Congress on June 5th, respecting De Francy's business, with the ideas of the *total* extinction of joint powers in the Commissioners for *special* purposes *after* the appointment of the minister plenipotentiary for *general* concerns?

The list you give of letters written on and before the 5th of Dec<sup>r</sup> last, differing from one now before me, of receipts, I give it that you may see you have not sent a list of all we have received, nor have we received all *you* have registered.

1778. Jan. 5, 6, 15, 31; Feb. 10, 15, 28; April 1, 2, 4, 8; June 1, 5, 15, 17; July 16; Aug. 7, 11, 21, 27, 31; Sept. 9, 30; Oct. 5, 19; Nov. 4, 15, 18, 20, 29; Dec. 5.

1779. Jan. 5, 28, 15, 20; March 7; April 6.

Izard, Jan. 18; March 4.

Adieu, and prosper,

J. L[OVELL].

*Lee Mss., Harvard University.*

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COMMUNICATION FROM ROWLAND. NO. I.

MR. DUNLAP,—The public may now see by the printed Journals of Congress, that the Hon. Arthur Lee, Esq., continues in high confidential place in Europe, under the authority of these United States. They may see that there was an extraordinary division of sentiment among the Members of Congress, on April 3d, in regard to that continuance—4 to 4, and 4 divided. They will doubtless conclude that the division was chiefly, if not intirely, a consequence of Mr. Deane's publication in your paper of December 5, last year. And they may also imagine that the same cause will produce, in a degree, a similar effect on the minds of many persons in Europe. You have shown in your last paper that Mr. Lee apprehended this. But you quoted, from the Connecticut Courant, an uncorrect translation of his letter of February 8th to the editor of the Leiden Gazette, of the 23d, which is truly as follows :

“ I pray you, Sir, to give the public the following answer to the contents of a letter which hath appeared under the signature of Silas Deane, viz.: That I declare, in the most solemn manner, that *all the accusations against me which it contains are absolutely false.* A particular detail of the proof which will demonstrate not only that those accusations are false and scandalous, but also, that the accuser has, in all reason and justice, lost the confidence of the public, is due to the Delegates of the United States in Congress assembled, whose servant I am; and I cannot give this detail to the public without their permission. In the meantime I assure myself that a CLEAR AND

POSITIVE DENIAL will be regarded by every honest and impartial person as a sufficient answer to BARE ACCUSATION, manifestly dictated by the rancour of a man DISPLACED.

[Signed]

ARTHUR LEE."

The letter is introduced by a remark that an affair of Mr. Deane's with the Lee family had, *more than any thing else*, contributed to give credit to the report of a division in Congress. The public, watchful for the prosperity of their own affairs, and at the same time justly tender of the honor and reputation of their official servants, seldom need more than to be furnished with a true state of facts, to enable them to draw the most judicious conclusions, and to distribute their praise or blame with conspicuous equity. If Mr. Deane's *insinuations* against Mr. Lee have a solid basis, if his allegations can be supported by good vouchers, Mr. Lee ought not longer to hold a confidential trust; but if traduced, the public countenance in his favor, manifested by their continuing him in office, will at once be recompence and glory. An investigation of facts connected with this business is but a decent mark of respect, due to the people of these United States, from every individual who is in any way particularly capable of coming honorably at the truth of them. It is chiefly from a sense of this duty that I ask a column for to-morrow in your widely circulating paper. I have an inferior motive, which is a report that Mr. Deane will soon leave Philadelphia, being discharged from any further attendance on Congress. My patriotic endeavors may therefore become depreciated, on a delay, by a surmise that I waited for his absence before I chose to appear openly to counteract his publication above referred to. I would not indeed have rested even till now, if I could have dared to present to the public eye only the most glaring presumptions and uncontrovertible inferences. Facts alone suited me.

I believe I cannot, without being tedious, furnish for this time more than one specimen of the manner in which I mean to proceed; but that one will secure for me the public attention hereafter.

Mr. Deane says: "*Immediately*, on the arrival of the news of General Burgoyne's surrender, a treaty with France seemed to the British Ministry more near and more probable; your Commissioners, therefore, were continually sounded, indirectly, as to their dispositions for reconciliation. *About this time* Mr. Lee's Secretary went to and from London, charged with affairs which were secret to your other Commissioners. Conjectures were formed, it is true, and with the more reason as Mr. Lee was dragged into the treaty with the utmost reluctance. It was agreed that this important matter should be kept a profound secret, yet, a few days from the signing, it was pointedly declared in the House of Commons by the Hon. Charles Fox, Esq., the friend of Lord Shelburne; this gave additional weight to the other circumstances."

Here are several insinuations, one fact, and part of another. To which I contrast the following: On December 4th, 1777, Mr. Jonathan Loring Austin arrived in Paris with the Saratoga Convention. Astonishing as it may appear after Mr. Deane's assertion, Doctor Lee had not any secretary at that time, Mr. Sayer having left him the June before at Berlin. He did not take another till late in January, 1778, when he employed a Major Thornton, who had been chosen by Messrs. Franklin and Deane to carry a letter from the Commissioners to Lord North, Mr. Lee never having before seen or heard of him. On December 11, 1777, Dr. Franklin writes to Sir Grey Cooper: "We have prevailed with a gentleman, Major Thornton (to us much a stranger, but who appears to be a man of humanity), to visit the prisoners, and give from us some relief. This gentleman remained in London part the 3d of January, as appears by some of his letters; an unlucky letter, as I shall show hereafter. I cannot tell

exactly the day of his return, but having behaved with laudable spirit on this occasion, he was sent to England by Dr. Lee on February 11th, and a second time on April 30th, 1777, for purposes seasonably communicated to proper persons in France, and known now to Congress. I proceed to the insinuations of half fact: Charles Fox is made the 'friend,' while others say he is notoriously the family-foe of Lord Shelburne; and the speech of C. Fox is omitted. Why? Because he declared he had seen a letter of *Dr. Franklin's*, in which *that* Commissioner of America says to his correspondent at London, 'ten days ago the Deputies of Congress signed, with the French Ministry, a treaty of commerce wherein all the formalities customary between nation and nation contracting have been solemnly observed.'" Vid. *Courier de l'Europe*, Feb. 24, 1778. If we suppose Mr. Deane did not early know as well as others what C. Fox had uttered in February, let it be kept in mind that Mr. Deane did not publish till the December following.

I have only taken up the paragraph of the publication now, as connected with the insinuation that Mr. Lee had betrayed to the enemy "an important matter agreed to be kept a profound secret." I leave the candor of the public time to weigh the veracity of Doctor Lee's accuser as to the facts advanced therein, and to assay exactly the value of his current innuendos. But it is proper here to mention that the missions of the Secretary to London have been insinuated to be for stock jobbing purposes; and that Doctor Lee, disdaining the suggestion, has been happy enough to trace out a curious scene, in which the crime falls back upon the pate of the accusers, as I shall endeavour to shew in considering again that letter of Thornton's which I have called "unlucky." I shall not what is said of Doctor Lee's being "dragged into the treaty with the utmost reluctance." And I shall show the very honorable nature of the only *two* letters which he has written to Lord Shelburne, after parting from him

in London to become our Commissioner, his Lordship not having directly or indirectly attempted to draw a third from him.

ROWLAND.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, August 10, 1779.*

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COMMUNICATION FROM THOMAS PAINE.

MR. DUNLAP,—On the Saturday preceeding the election of a Committee for the city and liberties, I was under an engagement to publish, in your paper of that day, an answer to Mr. Deane's application to Capt. Peale, respecting some expressions used by the latter at the Coffee-house, on the morning of the last Town Meeting.

It was unpleasant to me to find myself obliged to say less in that publication than was generally expected, and it was not till after I had made the engagement that I saw the necessity of being somewhat reserved. I am persuaded Mr. Deane is not so ignorant of the matter as he affects to be, and that he only wanted to be furnished with an opportunity to make an ill use of.

I had likewise another reason, which was, that as Mr. Deane had applied for some information to Capt. Peale, which myself only could give him a proper answer upon, I intended, by not doing it in the public papers, to improve it into an opportunity that should bring him and me face to face, as well on that as on other matters; to accomplish which, and likewise to prevent any ill use being made of the publication above mentioned, I sent the following letter to Mr. Deane the next morning.

Market-street, Sunday, August 1st, 1779.

SIR,—If you really wanted the information you applied for to Capt. Peale, I shall in this letter put you in a way to procure it. You will at the same time please to observe that I was not at the Coffee-house

when the conversation passed to which you allude in your letter of the 27th ult.; neither can I learn from any person what the precise words were, some representing them more and some less. I cannot make myself a judge of that part of the business, neither will they affect one way or other the matter in question. If it should turn out (as it will not) that no offer was made to me for any purpose whatever, your affairs will stand just as they did; and if the contrary should be found, and that your affairs were some way or other connected with that offer, they will not appear the better for it.

I believe Capt. Peale's motive for mentioning it was to silence the groundless and illiberal reflections of those who endeavoured to give out that I wrote for reward, when I made my publications on your affairs. In those publications I have done honor to the generous people of France, to whom we are happily allied; I have done justice to the States, and no injustice to you; and so far, Sir, from being paid for writing them, I might have been rewarded either to have let them alone, or to have concurred in measures that might have been pointed out to me. What those measures were was not mentioned.

I had many reasons for not giving the whole in the paper of last Saturday, which I am persuaded every well wisher to his country, could he know and feel these reasons as well as I do, would honor me for. By not doing it, I submitted myself to a temporary inconvenience; yet had I done it without taking the necessary precaution to prevent misrepresentation I am well aware of the ill use would have been made of it.

I ought to have expected that on the appearance of Saturday's paper you would have requested Congress to have enquired into the matter, and desired I might have been immediately called before them. Your neglect in so doing shows, to me at least, that you are not very anxious, and that your application for a name was to answer some other end than barely to know.— A name might have served a purpose, and added to

the false coloring which have been industriously cast on the Committee for detaining the flour, and enquiring into the circumstances of the exportation of that article, been ungenerously and illiberally played off to suit the purpose of an election now on hand.

Sir, make your application to me in company with any three gentlemen who are or have been members of Congress, and I will meet you at any time and place to be agreed on, within the space of one week, in company with three gentlemen of the same rank, and give every particular and circumstance that you may require, or I can recollect, respecting the matter in question.

If you chuse to confine your request to three Members of Connecticut,\* I will confine mine to three who now are or have been Members for this State. If you chuse to be more general, I shall of consequence have a right to be the same. I will likewise submit myself to be asked by you any questions respecting any of my publications, or any part of my conduct, and I shall likewise claim the right of asking you any questions respecting such parts of your conduct as my publications have animadverted upon; and any questions on either side which shall be deemed improper by the gentlemen present, shall be answered or not at the choice of the party to whom they shall be put.

You will please to favour me with your answer to this some time to day, the sooner the more agreeable.

I am, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

Silas Deane, Esq.

In the evening I received the following.

Turner's-Lane, Sunday afternoon, 1 o'clock.

SIR,—Your letter of this day was this moment put into my hands by Col. Mitchel. I am engaged in company and shall not return to town until evening. I

\*Mr. Deane is a native of that State.



shall take the first convenient opportunity to give you a proper answer.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Paine.

The next morning I received the following evasive refusal of the proposal I had made.

Philadelphia, August 2, 1779.

SIR,—I was well informed, and I firmly believe, that Mr. Peale said at the Coffee House you had been offered a bribe not to write against me. From hence it would naturally be supposed that I had directly or indirectly been concerned in that offer. I therefore called on him for the *name* or *names* of the parties. As to the circumstances, they can be of no consequence, for I am confident that upon an investigation of the matter, evidence must appear to exculpate me from the charge, much more satisfactory to the candid and honest part of my countrymen than any thing it is possible for you to say.

Mr. Peale's and Mr. Paine's intentions are alike indifferent—you engaged to give the information required in Saturday's paper; you have not done it. But you speak of some proposition made to you, and you could not possess yourself of the mind of the gentleman who proposed it so as to declare what every intention of his might be, but that you well know the acceptance of it would have effectually prevented your publication of the 16th of February. From hence, this one thing at least is evidently apparent, that you are far from acknowledging the offer alleged by Mr. Peale.

It is by no means my business to investigate the bargains you may have made for the use or abuse of your pen; and did I desire it, you are the last person to whom I should apply for the *real* state of *facts*. If you or any other shall affirm that I, or any person by my order, or with any knowledge, made you directly or

indirectly any offer whatever, to purchase your silence with relation to me or my affairs, it will become me to require the *name* or *names*; but at present it is quite sufficient to assert the falsity of such allegations.

Since you appear solicitous to know the reasons of my silence in regard to your publications, I will give you one which your own consciousness must convince you is quite satisfactory. As Mr. Paine cannot bring any evidence whatever in support of his charges, the injustice of which he must be himself fully convinced of, it would not only be beneath the character of a faithful public servant, but an insult on the public candor, to attempt a confutation of them. You have, it seems, left the investigation of your bribe to Congress. I am content. Let them investigate it, if they think the importance of the thing merits enquiry. In the interim, you and your friend Mr. Peale may at your leisure determine whether you told him a falsehood, or he told one to the people at the Coffee-house; or whether, if some person has really bribed or offered to bribe you, it not now incumbent on Mr. Paine to mention the name as publicly as Mr. Peale mentioned the thing.

The citizens of Philadelphia may also determine whether they have not a right to insist on it. But as Mr. Paine's publication contains a sufficient disavowal of Mr. Peale's assertions, I am satisfied; and I pray you to believe that I am far from having so much respect either for the person or character of Mr. Thomas Paine, as to covet any conversation or intercourse with him which is not absolutely necessary.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

To Mr. Paine.

I now think it full time to take my leave of Mr. Deane; neither can he, after declining the fair and open offer I made to him, have the least pretence to complain. If he be an honest man, and innocent of

the things which he well knows I suspect him guilty of, he would have met me on the ground I proposed, glad of the opportunity of proving me wrong.

Why he should affect to be satisfied, or what right he can have to conclude "*that my publication contains a sufficient disavowal of Mr. Peale's assertions,*" I am quite at loss to find out. Mr. Peale has a much greater right to say that Mr. Deane admits what he asserted at the Coffee-house, by his declining to meet Mr. Paine on the subject.

I believe Mr. Deane expresses himself very sincerely when he declares how little respect he has for me. I have resigned one salary under Congress, and declined the offer of two others of more value, that I might be perfectly at liberty to do the country justice against his impositions, and it is not very natural he should express himself otherwise. I therefore pardon the affront for the sake of the truth it contains, fully believing it to be the honestest expression he has used since his return to America.

I am but at little loss to guess the quarter from whence the late abusive pieces signed Cato, and others of the same cast, really came, and the end they were designed to answer ; but so much have the authors of them been mistaken, that, without the least endeavors of mine, the resentment they hoped to excite has fallen upon themselves ; and they have, at the same time, added to my reputation by bringing my refusal of an advantageous offer into public notice, which otherwise might have rested in oblivion, or been very little known, it being near seven months since the affair happened.

But must it not appear very extraordinary that the man who last winter threw a whole country into the utmost confusion under the pretence of serving them, should now shrink from a genteel and honorable opportunity of vindicating himself from the heavy suspicions that have since taken place against him ? If he be not guilty, the offer must have been agreeable ;

and if he be, he had best take care of himself. I have by me copies of several letters he has wrote to Congress complaining of my publications; but why do not his connections in that House, if they think him innocent, demand an hearing for him, or why does he not demand one for himself, or why does he not accept that which I have offered him? I have waited beyond the time of a week to give him an opportunity of acceding to it, notwithstanding his declining it in his letter to me.

Upon the whole, is it so light a matter to be suspected of defrauding the country of a very large sum of money and embezzling the public dispatches to conceal the delinquency, that Mr. Deane does not think it worth his while to vindicate himself from the suspicions? Or can he be so foolish as not to see the suspicion is become almost universal? The silence of that Congress he once so much confided in, his own silence, and the silence of his most intimate connections, all tend to show that something is the matter.

T. P.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, August 10, 1779.*

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JAMES LOVELL TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Philadelphia, August 12th, 1779.

It behoves you to be very industrious in informing *good* men *what* has caused certain delays in the proceedings here for some months back. Let them know that there has not been any proof of an *honest* intention in Britain to treat of peace; that France and Spain indeed seemed earnest to know *our* ultimata, especially in points which were nearly allied to their interests—Florida and Newfoundland.

I have said *good* men. I esteem Mr. Ellis Gray one. I have seen his allarms and sentiments. I have a desire that such a man should be well instructed in the grounds of the conduct of the delegates both

in regard to ultimata and the business of our Commissioners. The party here have industriously sent Paca's and Drayton's paper to Boston, and Mr. Cushing has seen it, and makes just such an use of it in his letters as you can readily suppose he gives *other people's* remarks, but you cannot *swear* it is giving his own opinion. Other folks and people cannot account for the vote of the Massachusetts delegates, *after* the information from the French Minister.

I again repeat that I hope *Mr. Gray* will find from you, principally or secondarily, that the support of a virtuous officer is exceedingly interesting to *Republics*. Where salaries and fees are the temptations to serve, as in Monarchies, there may be a levity as to changes. But the grand test in Republics should be *good behavior*. But no say some folks and some people, what is it to the public whether an officer is accused rightfully or wrongfully, if the state is like to be injured consequentially? What honest man will venture to become a successor to an office vacated on such principles? We must let men see that capacity, honor, and integrity shall support them against all the undermining arts of the vicious or the darts of malice.

I suppose you will readily see the subordinate line in which one of the letter writers acts. I conceive the copy of Paca's and Drayton's paper was not sent to either of the gentlemen above mentioned. I should begin to think better of the *gemmen* here, if they were in correspondence with so virtuous a man as *Gray*.

I mean you should only know *he* has written for your clue, not for a direct eclaireissement. As to the other, you must have had twenty opportunities of knowing he has seen Paca and Drayton's performances without *my* telling you.

Hezekiah Ford arrived August 1st in Virginia. He left Mr. Adams June 29 off the Western Isles. Mr. Adams had *good news*. Ford will be here in a few days, when I will write more fully.

We are boguing about  $\frac{1}{2}$  pay *for life*. The Bear is

in licking ; but it will be a Bear after all. But the Massachusetts delegates had better not oppose it, because the opposition *delays* business.—If Mr. J. Adams should happily land in your quarter, I hope he will let people and folks know that he has attested sufficient vouchers to prove that A. Lee has been most falsely accused and greatly injured.

Yours,

J. L[OVELL].

*Bancroft Mss., Lenox Library.*

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JAMES LOVELL TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

[Philadelphia], August 17th, 1779.

DEAR SIR,—Your favour of the 7th is in my hand. I am surprised that you had not then heard of the arrival of Ford on the 1st, at Metompinkin. Mr. Adams was at Braintree on the 3d, and Count Luzerne in Boston. I have no despatches from either, but I have a letter from Nantz of May 25th, an extract of which you will see in the paper of to-morrow, as well as the continuation of Rowland's communications, of part of what you think ought to be published. You talk of your having a sort of right to a copy of the papers sent by Arthur. You little know of the droll motion made by your *merry* friend to stigmatize Arthur for having enclosed to an individual what he desired might be communicated to a select committee of Congress, to prevent the consequences of a *palam* examination of the vouchers. But as on the one hand I contended for an open reading of the whole that was sent, I most easily convinced the House that every officer in their service has a right to communicate *such* papers as these in question to any individual friend, on whose judgment he chooses to depend, either to present or burn resignations, memorials, and defences, these being personal concerns ; and I mentioned having by me some things, thus enclosed, upon which

I should act my sovereign pleasure. I thought this necessary, that I may act with good grace, if I should see cause to give in any of the papers now in my trunk, at a time when it would not be possible to prove a late arrival. The motion was withdrawn, inch by inch, I pledging myself to prove that Congress never had an *official* paper kept from them by the mode mentioned in the motion, viz., covering *despatches* of a minister to an individual. I mean, I pledged myself, so far as concerns Arthur Lee, Esq. Your brother was totally mistaken as to D's credit here; but I wait with impatience to know more by Mr. Adams. Our Penobscot expedition is not yet well over. Collier *may* do great hurt there. I have a few lines from Mr. Samuel Adams; he is, as you think, greatly engaged in town and *body* meetings, and in the general assembly. They have great expectation of mending the currency by vigorous taxation and loan; but I look for credit to the poor *eastern* states mainly from a successful expedition, though even in that case W. H. D. will be against them. He spouted an invidious motion about their fleet to relieve South Carolina and Georgia. Observe the cursed rascality of sending to New York, as well as to Boston, the Paca-Drayton effort. Though in the former case, there is a supererogatory section of its being a committee information.

I find that paper is stolen from me. It was either Poughkeepsie or Fishkill; you can get it by inquiring of your printer. I have recovered it. The party are provoked beyond measure at seeing the vouchers sent out by Rowland; but I tell them "they are free for any member who chooses to use them, only it is at his peril, if he does not guard against offending France, Spain or Prussia, or exposing *honest whigs* to danger. The affair of Barker Fort can be put in a light to damn D.'s virulence, exerted under pretended care of the public safety. Simple views must be first given of the state of facts, and at the close a freedom in inferences, reflections, and brands may be taken; in-

deed, this part may be performed in the different states upon an exhibition of vouchers here. It will have more effect by springing from different quarters; the main point will be to establish the propriety of supporting merit in republics against envy and falsehood, rather than suffering it to be crushed from a foolish idea of convenience to the public. The contrary would be to induce eventually a *maximum*, to avoid a present *quid detrimenti*. I wish your health may suffer you to attend to this. *Speeches* should be *short* to be *generally* read.

J. LOVELL.

I will attend to your request about Beaumarchais' charge. I have no reason now in favour of giving the resignation, but rather the opposite.

*Life of Richard Henry Lee, II. 146.*

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COMMUNICATION FROM ROWLAND. No. II.

MR. DUNLAP,—I have said that the news of Burgoyne's surrender arrived in Paris December 4th, 1777, when Doctor Lee had no Secretary; and that February 21st, misprinted by you 11th, cannot be termed "about that time," so as to answer the malignant purpose of the published insinuation. But Mr. Deane himself had an acting Secretary, living under the same roof with the Commissioners at Passy, who went off express for London the very day the news arrived. An appeal for the truth of this is made to Mr. Austin, who carried the dispatches to France, and to other Americans who were in Paris or in London at that juncture. Whatever of infamy was in that transaction was charged upon Mr. Lee in common with his colleagues, as may be seen by Thornton's *unlucky* letter, long concealed from Mr. Lee. "Lord North told Mr. Hartley last Saturday, the 3d of January, 1778, that he knew of several persons who had come to London



from Messrs. Franklin, Deane, and Lee; and that Doctor Bancroft had been sent by those gentlemen on stock jobbing business." Worse may be seen by the following certificate, dated Paris, the 11th of April, 1778: "I do hereby certify, that I was shewn a letter in London, dated the 27th of January last, which I was told was written by Doctor Bancroft to Mr. Wharton, informing him, that he might depend upon it, he had it from the very best authority that the treaty with the Court of France was to be signed the 5th or 6th of February, and desiring him to make his speculations accordingly; in the above words, or words to that effect. I do also certify, that I have seen Doctor Bancroft's hand writing on other occasions, and that I believe the above-mentioned letter to have been written by him."

[Signed]

M. LIVINGSTON.

Witness, Geo. Digges.

This certificate is from a gentleman of unimpeached character, some time Lieutenant on board the Boston frigate, which he quitted with a recommendation to Congress from the Commissioners. He now commands the Governor Livingston, and is hourly expected in America. Here is the secret betrayed not *after*, but *before*, the treaty was signed. I deal in facts. They are other people who throw out insinuations about Secretary Bancroft's *best authority*, and the corroborating circumstance of Samuel Wharton's draft of Feb. 17, 1778, for 19,520 l. 14 s on Mr. Silas Deane.

I will finish this business quite, now it is on hand. Thornton was *unlucky* in telling Mr. Deane and Doctor Bancroft about Doctor Bancroft's and Mr. Deane's speculations in the stocks. There were soon whispers that Thornton had been concerned. Mr. Lee taxed him with it, but was satisfied, by the sight of a letter from Mr. Wharton, that tho' strongly solicited, Thornton would not hold a correspondence with him. The whispers grew stronger during his absence.

Droll arts were used, but in vain, to deprive him, while innocent, of Mr. Lee's confidence. At length the right mode was pursued. The man was inveigled into delinquency; and being called to render an account, he absconded. These things appear by letters from Mr. Lee, and other papers. He writes to Thornton, May 17th, 1778. "I received yours of the 7th and the newspapers. I mentioned to you the charges against you here of stock-jobbing. You must avoid giving any foundation for them. You know the quarter from which the accusation comes. It would be doubly improper for any one employed by me to be doing that which in itself is wrong, and which I am censuring in others." He writes to a friend in London, July 25th, 1778. "As Mr. T's conduct has appeared to you suspicious, I shall be obliged to you for any information that may be relied upon relative to his proceedings, which are the more to be watched as he has staid a long time contrary to my orders, alledging sickness." It is needless to give other extracts. What satisfied Mr. Lee was Mr. Austin's testimony that he had seen a note of Mr. Wharton to Mr. Thornton for 500 l. payable on condition that war should be declared before a certain day.

I promised to show the honorable nature of the only two letters written to Lord Shelburne by Doctor Lee after he became our Commissioner.

"Dec. 18, 1776.

"MY LORD,—A very few hours after my last letter to your Lordship, brought me the desire of my country to serve here in a public character. Your Lordship, I hope, thinks too well of me to suppose I could hesitate a moment. In fact, almost the same moment saw me bid adieu, perhaps forever, to a country where, from choice, I had fixed my fortunes, and to a people whom I most respected and could have loved. But the first object of my life is my country; the first wish of my heart is public liberty. I must see, therefore,

the liberties of my country established, or perish in her last struggle.

"In truth, I have long despaired even of a struggle for liberty in England. I will not insult Scotland with the idea. It is not the subtle Wedderburne poisoning the fountain of public security; nor the ruthless Thurlowe, deliberately butchering the liberties of his country, that makes me despair; but — and yet, perhaps, the people are only not virtuous, and America may yet, with a sort of filial piety, reanimate her expiring Constitution.

"Our pater patriot, with whom and Mr. Deane, I am joined in power, is in good health and spirits. If fate will have it that America, as she has reared her temples and her altars to Liberty, must furnish her victims too, I know not where she can find a sacrifice more respectable.

"Should the event of this measure be found fatal to England, it is the perfidy of her Ministers, which would never offer any thing that could be trusted, which compels it, and to which the consequences are justly imputable.

"I beg your Lordship to remember me as one who can never cease to have the most perfect esteem for you. I have communicated to the Abbé Raynal all the facts I could collect, in answer to his questions. He will write to you soon.

"May I beg to be remembered to our friends in the College, and to those out of it, who, I hope, will always do me the honor of remembering me—Col. Barré. Mr. Dunning, Doctor Priestley, Doctor Price, &c.

"I have the honor to be, &c."

"Dec. 10, 1777.

"MY LORD,—I have the honor of enclosing you the copy of a letter, transmitted at the same time, to the first Lord of the Treasury. The honor of the nation and the rights of humanity are too much interested in the object of it, not to receive your Lordship's advo-

cation. The enclosed papers contain the principal transactions between the northern armies. The burning defenseless towns and every thing before him, as General Clinton has done, will probably draw upon him and his the vengeance which such enormities deserve, in spite of all the endeavors of Congress to prevent any hasty retaliation. The South-Carolina Gazettes mention the arrival of an American Captain who had been taken by Captain Jarvis, and who mentions with the highest praise the generous and humane treatment he received from that officer. We have had from other prisoners accounts equally to his honor, which I am sure will give your Lordship pleasure. Capt. Jarvis may be assured that such conduct will command from us the praise and esteem which is always due to a generous enemy.

"The necessity which has made us enemies for a time, and separated us forever from the same government, has not altered the esteem felt for the good and wise in England. Among these I hope your Lordship and your friends will accept an assurance of my respect and friendship. I condole most sincerely with the family at Coombwood for the misfortune at New-York.

"I have the honor to be, &c.,

"A. LEE."

I must not now send you counter proofs to the insinuation that Doctor Lee was "dragged" into the treaty, because I shall, perhaps, fancy to give extracts from *all* those of his public and private letters written about that period which have come to my view. I cannot close, however, without noticing the insidious use of the singular number. There were two treaties. Did he not joy and rejoice at the treaty of Alliance? He objected to one single article in the treaty of commerce, which the equanimity of France readily abolished upon a suggested wish of Congress.

ROWLAND.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, Aug. 17, 1779.*

## TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, 18th August, 1779.

SIR,—I do myself the honor of enclosing a memorial, which I beg of you to lay before Congress as early as may be, and I flatter myself it will be taken under their consideration as soon as is consistent with the other important affairs before them.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., 1. 214.*

## MEMORIAL.

To the Honorable the Delegates of the United States of North America, in General Congress Assembled.

The Memorial of Silas Deane, late one of their Commissioners at the Court of Versailles, and their political and commercial agent, respectfully sheweth—

That he engaged to serve these States as their political and commercial agent in January, 1776, and soon after embarked for Europe.

That, on his arrival in France, he diligently applied himself to render these States every service in his power, as well in the political as in the commercial line.

That, previous to the arrival of the Honorable Doctor Franklin, in the month of November following, with a commission appointing him one of your Commissioners at the Court of Versailles, your memorialist had contracted for large supplies for these States, and had begun to ship off the same for this Continent, which, with the political concerns intrusted to his care, engrossed the whole of his time and the utmost of his attention, meeting with difficulties and embarrassments, which the situation of affairs in France, at that time, threw daily in his way.

That, on the arrival of Dr. Franklin, many circumstances conspired to increase the difficulties in the way of completing of those contracts, which lay wholly in your memorialist ; in addition to which, the executive part of the business of the Commissioners in contracting for and purchasing clothing and other stores for the armies of these States, the soliciting for supplies and assistance, and the procuring of ships to transport the same to these States, fell, in a manner, wholly on him ; and the obstacles he met with, and the embarrassments he found himself constantly under, were such that nothing but the hopes of procuring for his country the most important and seasonable supplies animated him to persevere amid the many difficulties which surrounded him.

That his situation and conduct at the time, having been already laid before Congress, need not be particularized at this time ; it is sufficient to say that, on the 4th of March, 1778, when all the stores your memorialist first contracted for were shipped, as were those purchased afterwards by himself and the Commissioners, his then colleagues ; and when the treaties of alliance and commerce, being happily completed, your Commissioners and agents found themselves, for the first time, at liberty to transact their affairs openly and with the protection of the court ; and when your memorialist found himself in a situation to complete the shipping off the stores still on hand, and to close the accounts of the several purchases made, and of the expenses thereon, he received the order of Congress, of the 8th of December, 1777, for his immediate return to America. Though your memorialist has at all times paid the most ready and implicit obedience to the orders of Congress, yet, situated as he then was, and as the affairs of the Commissioners and his own were, he then thought, and is still of opinion, that his immediate return might have been dispensed with until the accounts of the Commissioners, as well as of his own transactions, should be adjusted and

closed, had it not been for an object of the best importance to these States, which then presented itself, to obtain which, he then, and still, considers himself justified in neglecting every other consideration.

Your memorialist, therefore, knowing that it was impossible, without delaying his return for many months, to call in and close accounts open with persons who had been employed in different ports in France and Holland, by the Commissioners, in procuring the stores, and that to attempt to do it would expose his intention of returning, which it was necessary to be kept secret to effect the other purpose (already explained to Congress), he resolved on immediate compliance with the order received, and left Paris on the 30th of March, taking with him an account from the banker of all the moneys received and paid out, on account of, and by order of, the Commissioners, in order that Congress might have an authentic and exact state of their funds in France; which general account, with a particular explanation thereof, he laid before Congress immediately after his return, and to which no exceptions have ever been taken that have come to his knowledge.

On the arrival of your memorialist on the 10th of July in this river, and on the 12th in this city, he, without delay, applied to Congress on the subject of his return; his repeated applications to Congress, and the answers he has received are before them, and need not be recited here. Congress must also be sensible of the delays he has met with, and have some idea of what he has suffered thereby. Your memorialist, from his first arrival in America to this time, having repeatedly solicited Congress, as well in person as by his letters and petitions, that they would inform him if exceptions had been taken, or charges made against any part of his conduct, and that he might be heard thereon if there were. He has been the more urgent and pressing on this subject, knowing that his conduct had been misrepresented by his enemies whom he left

at Paris and at Nantes, and on account of the many false and abusive publications in the newspapers since his return. As his letters and petitions on this subject are still before Congress, your memorialist need not to repeat them, or the substance of them, at this time, but begs leave to observe that, from the resolutions of Congress of the 6th inst., by which *he is discharged from any further attendance on Congress*, and by which *the several Commissioners, commercial agents, and others in Europe, intrusted with public money, be directed to transmit, without delay, their accounts and vouchers, and also triplicate copies of the same to the Board of Treasury of these United States, in order for settlement*, he is obliged to conclude that congress are satisfied with his conduct whilst their political and commercial agent and Commissioner, and that they do approve thereof so far as the same has come to their knowledge, and that there are no charges against him before Congress, and that it is the resolution of Congress to have all the accounts of their Commissioners and agents settled without delay; this resolution, which your memorialist petitioned for in October last, as by his letter of that date, still before Congress, will appear, obliges him without further loss of time to return to France, previous to which he requests the attention of Congress to his situation in a few particulars.

First, that it was his immediate compliance with the orders of Congress, and to render these States an important service, which occasioned him to leave France without first settling his accounts, and finally closing every transaction he had been concerned in, either as the political and commercial agent, or as one of the Commissioners of Congress.

Secondly, that though he is interested in the final settlement of those accounts, Congress is no less so; and that he cannot return to France and attend the settlement of those accounts, and for their final approbation, and being passed at the Treasury Board here, without a very great expense both of time and money,



for which no provision is made by the said resolutions of Congress.

Thirdly, that the person to *be appointed by Congress to examine the said accounts in Europe, and certify his opinion thereon previous to their being transmitted*, is not by said resolution empowered, in case he shall find a balance due to either of your agents or Commissioners, to order the same, or any part thereof to be paid ; and that your memorialist, well knowing that a considerable balance is, and will be, found due to him, which, considering the accidents of war, he must remain long deprived of, if, previous to its being paid, his accounts, though examined and approved of in France, must be transmitted for the final examination and approbation of the Treasury Board. That, at the same time that he has no objection to that mode of proceeding, being at all times desirous to prevent any possibility of error in the final settlement, and that Congress may have the most clear and ample satisfaction as to every part of his conduct, he can but inform Congress that his private fortune, which has suffered greatly by his absence and the depreciation of money, must be totally ruined if obliged to wait so long a space of time for the balance due to him ; on which your memorialist most respectfully entreats of Congress that the circumstances of his return to America, and his situation since, as well as the necessity of his return to France without loss of time, may be considered by them, and that such provision may be made therefor as shall appear just ; and that the person to be appointed to examine his accounts in Europe, and to certify his opinion thereon, may be empowered and directed to order him the payment of the balance which shall be found in your memorialist's favor, he giving security to be accountable therefor in case that, on the final examination of his accounts by the Board of Treasury, there shall be found any mistake or erroneous change therein. Your memorialist flatters himself that his request will appear reasonable and just

in the eyes of Congress, and that they will grant him the prayer of his memorial ; and he, as in duty bound, shall ever pray for their and his country's glory and happiness.

SILAS DEANE.

Philadelphia, August 16, 1779.

*Case of Silas Deane, Seventy-Six Society, page 77.*

COMMUNICATION FROM ROWLAND. NO. III.

MR. DUNLAP,—Mr. Lee “was dragged into the treaty with the utmost reluctance,” says S. Deane. I shall make it appear that, from the moment the treaty was taken up by the French Court, Mr. Lee was anxious for its conclusion, rejoiced in the event, and expressed most sanguine expectations from it. The success at Saratoga reached France December 4, 1777. On the 18th the Commissioners *jointly*, with *equal* warmth of expression, communicated to Congress the assurance of a speedy alliance. On the 19th, Mr. Lee writes to his brother Richard Henry : “Our joint dispatches will inform you how near we are to a conclusion of what must settle the question between Great-Britain and the United States for ever. I see no reason to doubt the good faith of what they promise here, and much to *admire the substantial wisdom of it.*” On February 5, 1788, to the same : “The delay of our dispatches enables me to add this to my former, and to assure you that the business has gone on with all possible dispatch, and that in all human probability my next will inform you of its happy conclusion.” On the 9th, to his brother Francis : “I congratulate you, *with all my heart*, on the treaties which Congress will receive by the frigate that brings this.” On the 17th, to the Hon. S. Adams : “Let me embrace you, my dear friend, on the accomplishment of all our labors by the treaties which will accompany this, in which the Liberty, Sovereignty, and Independence of the United

States are secured. I thought it absolutely necessary that we should urge the insertion of Sovereignty, that there might not hereafter be any question on that head, as there was long in the case of the United Provinces and the Swiss Canton." On the 28th, to the Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Affairs: "Our general dispatches will convey to you the bills as they are now passing in the Parliament of Great-Britain, for appointing Commissioners to negotiate with their *deluded* subjects, and declaring in what manner they will be *graciously* pleased in future to exercise the right of *taxing us*. It would not be doing justice to their bills to attempt any comment upon them. They speak for themselves, and loudly, too; but the Ministry of England give out that they have dispatched half a million of Guineas to pave the way to a favorable reception of their propositions. And I know from the best authority here that they have assured Count M. of their being sure of a majority in Congress. By such base arts do they endeavor to cover their nakedness and sustain their desperate cause. France has done us substantial benefits—Great Britain substantial injuries. France offers to guarantee our Sovereignty and universal freedom of commerce. Great Britain *condescends* to accept our submission and *monopolize* our trade. France demands of us to be independent. Great Britain, tributary. I do not comprehend how there can be a mind so debased or an understanding so perverted as even to *balance* between them." On March 1st, to the same: "I was in hopes to-day's post would have brought us news from England, and the acts for negotiating with you. If we may judge of them from the bills, they will be an everlasting proof of the feebleness and folly of our enemies. I trust their Commissioners will return as they came, unless they have power and do acknowledge clearly and fully the Sovereignty and Independence of America as an indispensable preliminary." On the 19th, to the Hon. Henry Laurens, P. S.: "Tomorrow we are to be

presented to the King of France, and the English Ambassador quits this Court without taking leave. War must immediately be the consequence, as these movements have been determined upon from the treaty of amity and commerce which we have concluded with this Court having been announced in form to that of London. The consequence of this, in relieving our country from the chief weight of the war, cannot but follow, and I congratulate you upon it most sincerely." On April 4th, to the same: "I trust he (Mons. Gerard) will conduct his negociation agreeable to what appears to me to be the disposition of the Court and Ministers here—fairness and generosity." I restrain myself from adding extracts of what Mr. Lee has written to Governor Henry and others, tending to illustrate the point of his sanguine expectations of the consequences of the alliance with France; having proved that he wished for it, and rejoiced at its completion, no one can doubt concerning the true grounds of that wish and that joy.

It is proper here to notice the insinuations respecting an improper connection between Dr. Lee and Dr. Berkenhout. The ideas of the former as to an accommodation with Britain being a good appendix to the anecdotes of his strong attachment to our present allies. Doctor Lee not only communicated to his colleagues a part, as Mr. Deane says, but all of the correspondence alluded to, which concerned them jointly. He went further. He laid it before the French Ministry, and his answer was made by their unanimous consent. Very unlike this was Mr. Deane's conduct in two cases, which may be hereafter mentioned. Nor was Berkenhout's correspondence with Mr. Lee broken off by "Howe's success," but because the English Ministry understood there was a difference between Dr. Franklin and Mr. Lee, which rendered it useless to treat with them. This report had been propagated industriously both in France and England, during Mr. Lee's absence at Berlin, indubitably by the man and

the tools of the man who thought himself "saddled" with a colleague of strict honor and just economy. Mr. Deane tells that Berkenhout said, after his release from prison here, "that he had letters to the Hon. R. H. Lee, Esq. from the Hon. Arthur Lee, Esq. This falsehood may, possibly, have originated with Berkenhout. Mr. Lee not only did not write a line by Berkenhout to his brother or any other person in America, but neither he nor Mr. Temple ever apprized Dr. Lee of their intentions of going. He was informed of it by others, just about the time of their sailing, and had some correspondence concerning it. A good American Whig, now in France, and the author of some late interesting notice to Congress, wrote to Dr. Lee from London, May 1st, 1778: "I hope you are satisfied about Temple and Berkenhout; the doubts are great here. If you think they are right, let me know, that I may satisfy myself and others." To which an answer was given, May 11th, "T. and Dr. B. never apprized me of their going. I thought well of their intentions in general, but this adventure gives no proof of the soundness of their judgment. I am of opinion they will not be suffered to land without taking the oath of allegiance; and it seems to me that their errand is somewhat dangerous on their part, and very foolish on that of their employers." This shews what he thought *ought* to have been the consequence of their coming. It seems one of the men is yet in employ, for Dr. Lee writes, January 5th, 1779: "The inclosed copy is of a letter from Dr. Berkenhout, by which Congress will see how much our enemies are distressed, and yet how inveterate they are in their persuasion that because every thing is venal among themselves, therefore it must be so among us. It looks like a visitation upon the King of England and his advisers, that experience never makes them wise. They see and have seen, or rather feel, the necessity of making peace. They have tried all undue means in vain, and yet they still persist in dishonoring and disgracing themselves by a repeti-

ion of ineffectual attempts, and neglect the only obvious means pointed out to them by Congress for obtaining upon honorable terms the pacification for which they will shortly be obliged to sue most humbly.

Xtmasday, '78.

ONCE more (as Ranger says) safe to the temple ! I hate all your bloody-minded rogues on both sides the question. Peace, everlasting Peace, is my hobby-horse and my pride ; *illam Coluisse artem quae humanum genus conservare docet. I dreamt* last night that you and I met somewhere on the Continent of Europe ; whether it was at Paris, at Spa, at Brussels, or at Aix la Chapelle, I am not certain. I thought I had ten thousand things to communicate ; that we entered deeply into several important disquisitions ; that every obstacle vanished before us ; that we restored the jarring world to harmony, and that *emoluments* and *honors* were the rewards of our labour. If you have had any dream of this sort, tell me so, and I will meet thee at Philippi, be that where it may.

These are times, my friend, when much may be expected, because much may be done. Do not treat this matter lightly. Tell me only that I may come with safety, that you wish to see me, and that, notwithstanding all you may have heard, you believe me when I swear by our ancient friendship that I am

SEMPER EADEM.

Mr. Lee, as before, communicated his intended reply to his colleagues and to the Ministry. His letters to and from Mr. De Vergennes do him much honor, as well as the following answer sent to London :

Paris, January 7, 1779.

YOUR favor of the 25th did not reach me so soon as by the date it should have done. I congratulate the ladies very sincerely on your safe return from an expedition the fruitlessness of which I could easily have

foretold. My *waking* opinion is, that a meeting any where will be equally fruitless on any other plan than that marked out by Congress; that without the concurrence of our allies, no Conference will be held or treaty made; that you will come with safety and effect, if armed with adequate powers, to acknowledge the Sovereignty of the United States, and are content with terms consistent with the most perfect good faith to our allies.

On these conditions our jarring worlds may harmonize again; and I am persuaded that delay will only add to these demands, and render the blessed work of peace more difficult. However we may lament the calamities of war, we are determined it shall not end but in permanent peace and safety.

You have always known me to be sincere, and you may be most assured that I never was more so than at present. Adieu.

I fear I have already engrossed more than the portion you promised me of your paper.

ROWLAND.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, Aug. 24, 1779.*

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#### PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

*Philadelphia, Thursday, August 26, 1779.* The Committee on the Treasury, in obedience to the order of Congress to report a reasonable allowance for the time and expences of Silas Deane, Esquire, from the expiration of three months after the notice of his recall from Europe, finding the said three months to expire on the 4th of June, 1778, report

That a warrant issue on the Treasurer in favour of Silas Deane, Esquire, late Commissioner of the United States at the Court of France, for ten thousand dollars in full consideration of his time and expences

during his attendance on Congress from the 4th of June, 1778, until the 6th day of August, inst.

A motion was made by Mr. John Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Cyrus Griffin, to strike out "ten thousand."

The States being equally divided, the words were struck out.

A motion was made by Mr. Joseph Spencer, seconded by Mr. John Dickinson, to fill the blank with "fifteen thousand."

The yeas and nays being required by Mr. Laurens, it passed in the negative.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. James Searle, to fill the blank with "twelve thousand."

The yeas and nays being required by Mr. Nathaniel Peabody, it passed in the negative.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. William Sharpe, to fill the blank with "ten thousand five hundred."

The yeas and nays being required by Mr. Nathaniel Scudder, it was resolved in the affirmative.

On the question to agree on the resolution as amended, the yeas and nays being required by Mr. Laurens, it was resolved in the affirmative.

*Journals of Congress.*

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#### COMMUNICATION FROM ROWLAND. NO. IV.

MR. DUNLAP,—My plan has been to notice in order such parts of Mr. Deane's address of Dec. 5, 1778, as called in question Doctor Lee's fidelity to America and to her ally, intending afterwards to make some remarks upon other passages less material to the public. I think I have gone thro' with the first class, except a single instance. Mr. Deane told the world that "a gentleman of character told him that his correspondent in England had seen a letter from the Hon.



Arthur Lee, Esq., dated the very day on which the treaty was signed (tho' it was not finished until near nine o'clock at night), in which were nearly these words : " This day the new partnership was signed and sealed, and the new house will begin to do business immediately ; if the old house means to have any thing to do further, and means honestly, they must make their proposals immediately." Had Mr Deane named this gentleman of character or his correspondent, Mr. Lee or any other person could have traced and refuted the falsehood. But as it was contrived, Mr. Lee could only place his denial against Mr. Deane's affirmation ; and though the public mind might not decide absolutely, yet it would be tainted with the suspicion that there must be something in the accusation, or a man would not hazard his name to it. Mr. Lee has been more fortunate than Mr. Deane intended, as may be seen by the following letters :

COPY OF A LETTER FROM THE HON. ARTHUR LEE,  
ESQ., TO MR. SAMUEL PETRIE IN PARIS, DATED  
PARIS, APRIL 8, 1779.

SIR,—It appears, by a letter lately published in the London papers, that Mr. Silas Deane has desired his correspondent in Paris to obtain from you " a copy of the letter which you received in March last from London, which gave the information of the signing the treaty."

It is probable you are not unacquainted with Mr. Deane's having accused me publicly of being the author of that information so given, of the signing of the treaty, and this (as he says) upon the authority of a respectable person in Paris, who had received such a letter as he writes for a copy of from you.

I therefore beg that you will do me the justice to inform me explicitly whether you gave Mr. Deane the information upon which he founds his accusation, and who the person is in London who pretends to

have seen a letter written by me, giving intelligence of the signing of a treaty with France, and dated the night it was signed.

I am sorry to trouble you on such a subject, but you must be sensible, Sir, how necessary it is that an untruth of this nature, whether lightly or maliciously asserted, should be traced to its author.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

[Signed]

ARTHUR LEE.

EXTRACT FROM MR. PETRIE'S ANSWER.

Arthur Lee, Esq.

"SIR.—In compliance with your request, in your letter of yesterday, to be explicit, I now inform you that I do not recollect ever showing any letter to Mr. Deane that I thought had any reference to you but I well remember reading to him a paragraph out of a letter received from London, stating that intelligence of the signature of the treaty with France had been transmitted there the very night on which it was signed, expressed in terms which could not have been misunderstood; and which intelligence, from a concurrence of circumstances, appeared to have been communicated by your brother, the Alderman. Of this fact I cannot suppose you ignorant.

"When I showed this letter to Mr. Deane, I meant only jocularly to upbraid his secrecy respecting a transaction which I understood your brother had unreservedly communicated several weeks before, but I had no idea of bringing censure upon any person whatever." [Signed] S. PETRIE.

Paris, Rue St. Anne,  
Friday Morning, April 9, 1779.

THE HONORABLE A. LEE'S ANSWER.

Paris, April 9, 1779.

Sam. Petrie, Esq.

SIR,—I had the honor of receiving your answer of this day's date to mine of yesterday. It is entirely •

satisfactory as to myself. But I cannot help believing your correspondent was mistaken as to my brother's having been the writer of such a letter, because I did not inform him that the treaty was signed till long after, and I am most sure he did not know it at the time he is supposed to have given the intelligence.

I am obliged to you, Sir, for the readiness with which you have given this satisfaction, and beg you will believe it was with much regret I gave you the trouble.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

[Signed]

ARTHUR LEE.

Besides infidelity, Mr. Deane wishes the world to have an impression of Dr. Lee's incapacity for executing a political commission. For he says that "by a wanton display of his errand, Mr. Lee gave great and just cause of distrust to the Court of Madrid," and hints that, therefore, he was restricted to the city of Burgos. He says, also, that Mr. Lee "was so unfortunate as to do nothing at Berlin, unless, indeed, we may give the name of business to the loss of his papers, by which a discovery was made of the secrets of his colleagues, and the British Ministry enabled to counteract the measures taken for the benefits of America."—Here I am staggered in my first intentions. I was to give facts. I am prompted to supply their place by the highest wrought execrations upon a man who knew that he was delivering in both instances the most downright falsehoods, which no one could prove by producing vouchers without running into an indiscretion, greatly criminal, both in regard to Spain and Prussia. Have I not produced enough on other points to show that I can command the most authentic papers? Will not a sensible public readily conceive that the disposition of Spain and Prussia is to be declared by themselves *in their own time*? I shall only now assert that Dr. Lee was, in both cases, an able, judicious Agent. The time may come when I

may tell what great things Mr. Lee *had* done within the compass of Mr. Deane's knowledge at the time of his publication.

ROWLAND.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, Aug. 31, 1779.*

ARTHUR LEE TO ———.

MR. DUNLAP,—I have lately seen published several extracts from letters said to have been received from Baltimore, but which had very much the appearance of having been written in this city. However this may be, I send you an extract of a *real letter* from Paris, and if the person whose strange conduct is the subject of the letter wants to know more of the matter, you may direct him to me.

I am, Sir, your humble servant, &c.

Paris, May 21, 1779.

SIR,—It is long since I felt, in common with every other well-wisher to the cause of *Liberty and Truth*, the obligations I was under to the *author of Common Sense*, for the very able and unanswerable manner in which he has defended those principles. The same public motives, I am persuaded, induced him to address the Public against Mr. Deane and his associates. The countenance and support which Deane has received is a melancholy presage of the future. Vain, assuming, avaricious, and unprincipled, he will hesitate at no crime to cover what he has committed, and continue his career.

The atrociousness of this man's conduct will in all likelihood produce the punishment of his crimes. Of one thing, however, I am most certain, that if a full and fair enquiry be not immediately made into the expenditure of the public money, if every attempt either boldly to resist or artfully evade a just and real settlement of the public accounts, or if collusive settlements are permitted, the impunity and success of the

past will encourage such crimes in future as will disappoint us of all we have been contending for.

The suspicions so generally entertained against those who have had large sums of the public money are substantiated by the studied delays, the artful intrigues, and constant evasiant evasions they employ to prevent a real, and procure a collusive, settlement. The impunity with which Mr. Deane has traduced and calumniated Congress to their face, the indulgence and even countenance he has received, the acrimonious and uncandid spirit of a letter concerning Mr. Paine's publications, which accompanied a resolve sent to Mr. Gerard, are matters of deep concern here to every friend to America.\*

We have hazarded much and labored much to vindicate and establish the liberties which public virtue must support, and which corruption will infallibly destroy. It is still our duty to endeavour to prevent the fatal prevalence of this poison, and I pledge myself to you, to Liberty, and to my country, that no consideration shall ever withhold my utmost contribution to so necessary a work.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, Aug. 31, 1779.*

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#### DEFENCE OF JOHN JAY'S LETTER.

MR. DUNLAP,—In your packet of Tuesday last is an anonymous publication, which introduces a letter said to have been written at Paris, *praising the author*

\* The letter here alluded to can be no other than that signed "John Jay," and published in Mr. Dunlap's paper of Jan. 16th. It is very extraordinary that Mr. Jay should write such a letter, because it contains the same illiberal reflections which Congress as a body rejected from their resolve of Jan. 12, as may be seen by any one who will peruse the proceedings of Congress for January last. Congress have since declined to give countenance to Mr. Jay's letter, for though he had a public authority for writing a letter to Mr. Gerard, he had no authority for the reflections he used; besides which, the letter would be perfectly laughable, were every circumstance known which happened at that particular time, and would likewise show how exceeding delicate and cautious a President of Congress ought to be when he means to act officially in cases he is not sufficiently acquainted with. [Note written by Thomas Paine.]

*of Common Sense*, and contains strictures on the letter from the President of Congress to Mr. Gerard, on the 13th day of January last, which covered the resolutions of Congress of the 12th day of the same month, expressing their disavowal and disapprobation of certain *groundless assertions* of Mr. *Thomas Paine*. Among other strictures on that letter, the author is pleased to assert, "*that Congress have since declined to give countenance to Mr. Jay's letter.*"

As the Public may not generally know that Mr. *Thomas Paine* was the publisher of these strictures, it may be proper to inform them that the letter in question was *publicly read in full Congress, and without a single dissenting voice ordered to be published.*

## IN CONGRESS.

*January 14, 1779. Ordered,* That the foregoing resolution, and also the resolution of the 12th, on the publications in the Pennsylvania Packet of the 2d and 5th instant, TOGETHER WITH THE LETTER OF THE PRESIDENT TO THE MINISTER, COVERING THE RESOLUTION, *and the Minister's answer*, BE PUBLISHED.

CHARLES THOMSON, Secretary.

*Extract from the Minutes.*

## IN CONGRESS.

*January 12, 1779.* Congress resumed the consideration of the publications in the Pennsylvania Packet of the 2d and 5th instant, under the title of *Common Sense* to the Public on Mr. Deane's affair, of which Mr. *Thomas Paine*, Secretary of the Committee of Foreign Affairs, has acknowledged himself to be the author; and also the memorials of the Minister Plenipotentiary of France of the 5th and 10th instant respecting the said publications: Whereupon,

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, That in answer to the memorials of the Honorable the Sieur Gerard, Minister Plenipotentiary of France, of the 5th and 10th instant,

*the President be directed* to assure the said Minister that Congress do fully, in the clearest and most explicit manner, disavow the publications referred to in his said memorials; and as they are convinced by indisputable evidence that the supplies shipped in the Amphitrite, Seine and Mercury *were not a present*, and that His Most Christian Majesty, the great and generous Ally of these United States, *did not preface* his alliance with any supplies whatever sent to America, so they have *not authorised* the writer of the said publications to make *any such assertions* as are contained therein, but on the contrary do *highly disapprove* of the same.

CHARLES THOMSON, Secretary.

*Extract from the Minutes.*

The following is a copy of the letter from the President of Congress to Mr. Gerard, covering the foregoing resolution :

Philadelphia, January 13, 1779.

SIR,—It is with real satisfaction that I execute the order of Congress for transmitting to you the inclosed copy of an act of the 11th instant, on a subject rendered important by affecting the dignity of Congress, the honor of their great Ally, and the interest of both nations.

The explicit disavowal and high disapprobation of Congress relative to the publications referred to in this act, will, I flatter myself, be no less satisfactory to His Most Christian Majesty than pleasing to the people of these States. Nor have I the least doubt but that every attempt to injure the reputation of either, or impair their mutual confidence, will meet with the indignation and resentment of both. I have the honor to be, Sir, with great respect and esteem,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN JAY.

To the Honorable the Sieur Gerard, Minister Plenipotentiary of France.

To which Mr. Gerard returned the following answer :

Philadelphia, January 14, 1779.

SIR,—I have received the letter with which you honored me the 13th instant, inclosing me the resolve of Congress, in answer to the representations I had the honor to make them on the 5th and 10th.

I intreat you to receive, and to express to Congress, the great sensibility with which I feel their frank, noble, and categorical manner of destroying THOSE FALSE AND DANGEROUS *insinuations which might mislead ignorant people, and put arms into the hands of the common enemy.*

To the King, my master, Sir, no proofs are necessary for the foundation of a confidence in the firm and constant adherence of Congress to the principles of the alliance ; but his majesty will always behold with pleasure the measures which Congress may take to preserve inviolate its reputation. And it is from the same consideration, I flatter myself, he will find my representations on the 7th of December equally worthy of his attention. I am, with respect and consideration, Sir,

Your humble and most obedient servant,

GERARD.

A true copy.

CHARLES THOMSON, Secretary.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, Sept. 7, 1779.*

HENRY LAURENS TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Philadelphia, August 31st, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,—Since the date of my last trouble, the 24th instant, I have been honoured with your favours of the 13th and 23d ; the former by an express messenger, who assured me he should not return till this day, but I learned last night, at Mr. Lovell's, that he went off suddenly on Sunday. Yesterday I received at Congress two packets and one small letter



directed to you ; these, I apprehend, came by the eastern post. At Mr. Lovell's request, I shall send them to him, to be forwarded in a proper manner. I am sorry to find you continue an invalid ; but how can it be otherwise, if you also continue to fatigue both body and mind ? You must not allow the attempts and designs of wicked men to operate in the very manner they would wish ; let us proceed fairly, and softly, and wisely, and truth will drive them out of their entrenchments ; they are now closely hemmed in and cannot escape. On Tuesday last, at the reading of a letter from A. Lee, Esq., I moved to commit that letter, together with Mr. Lee's vindication, to a special committee ; besides the reason of the thing, I grounded my motion on a commitment of a late memoir from Mr. Deane, a copy of which you will receive herewith. You will give this performance a more proper name. The motion was laboriously opposed, and, in C. T.'s language, after some time spent in debate, ousted by a motion for adjournment. On some day since Tuesday a report from the Treasury was taken up, recommending a warrant to issue for ten thousand dollars to the Hon. S. D., Esq., in full for his expenses from the 4th June, 1778. I opposed the payment of that, or any other sum to Mr. Deane, until he should account for the large sums of public money which have been in his hands. The question was put, shall ten thousand stand ? Lost ; motion to insert fifteen thousand ? Question lost ; to insert twelve thousand ? Lost ; to insert ten thousand five hundred ? Carried, even by voices who were against ten thousand, *or any sum*, because they were worried, and had been worried. This deficiency of firmness and perseverance is the source of much irregularity and much evil in public business. The yeas and nays were called for in every stage, and finally upon the resolutions. I reflect with pleasure that I stand uniformly through the whole. A question was asked of the treasury, has Mr. Deane given in an account of his expenses ? Artfully replied

to, by a gentleman who had formerly given proofs of his abilities in answering interrogations, *not a regular one! not a regular one!* This gentleman perfectly well knew that Mr. Deane had given in a very minute *one*, amounting to 29,000 dollars, and upwards; he also knew the artifice which had been practised by one of his colleagues at the board, to repossess Mr. Deane of paper, which he discovered could not be crammed down the throats even of the treasury. I had seen that account, and had been promised a copy of it; but, as I am informed, Mr. Deane, the very next morning, acted a high passion of offence at so shameful a demand, and his zeal for the public good carried him rather beyond the tone of prudence. He ordered that the account should be immediately carried back to the demandant, with a declaration that Congress would allow no such accounts. As Mr. Deane has not judged it proper to return that, or any other, 'tis not to be doubted but that a gentleman of Mr. Deane's candour now regrets his rashness in parting with the original. I received this relation from one of those worthy friends who sincerely wish to see right done, but who will not encounter trouble necessary to accomplish right. I shall endeavour to trace this matter to its source, and possible the whole House will be informed of it. Saturday last a letter from Mr. William Lee, accompanied by his vindication, was brought into Congress, but the "order of the day" laid those papers asleep; yesterday an attempt was made to keep them out of hearing a little longer. I complained heavily of the innovation, and after much debate they were in part read. The House grew thin, and at length, only eight states being present, adjourned. I believe I am wrong. William Lee's papers were read, those from Arthur Lee were not. My colleague Mr. Drayton had been confined to his bed some three weeks past. When I learned that he was really ill, I could not refrain from visiting him, his permission being previously obtained. When I approached his bed, he clasped my hand, and

wept affectingly ; after recovering his voice, he signified great satisfaction at seeing me, and particularly requested I would write a state of his case to Mrs. Drayton. The physicians think him dangerously ill ; say he may live one or two weeks longer ; that if he has strength for the discharge from an abscess in his side, they shall raise him again, but that he will remain an invalid several months. Upon Mr. Drayton's recovery, or upon the arrival of another colleague, my continuance here partly depends ; but I am much inclined to return homeward in the course of the next month. I believe I shall have the honour of waiting on you before the first of October. Finances as they were. News from Penobscot very unfavourable, but no particulars. I would compound for the loss of all our ships, provided the soldiers and sailors escape capture. Dunlap's paper of this morning will present Rowland some intelligence. I beg, sir, you will present my compliments to your brother. I shall have much to say to both you and him when I have the happiness of meeting you ; deferring to that time will be the best. Many clouds will in the mean time pass away, and subjects in embryo be matured. I remain, with sincere esteem and respect,

Your obliged and faithful humble servant,

HENRY LAURENS.

*Life of Richard Henry Lee, II. 14.*

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, September 4th, 1779.

SIR,—I take the liberty of addressing you on the subject of a memorial I presented to Congress, and pray you would inform me what the determination of Congress has been thereon.

I have the honor to be, with the most sincere respect and attachment, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., I. 214.*

TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Philadelphia, Sept. 7th, 1779.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have only to acquaint you that I propose leaving this city on Saturday or Sunday next for Headquarters, where I must meet you, as it will delay me, and counteract my designs, to go on as far as Wethersfield. My expectations of justice from Congress are at present closed, and I have marked out the line of my future conduct, on which I must wish to confer with you. I do not wish to have you set out to meet me until you hear from me, which shall be by express, appointing the place of our rendezvous; you will therefore hold yourself in readiness to set out on my sending to you. I have letters from our Simeon Deane in Virginia, who was well the first of this month.

I am, my Dear Brother, your's,

S. DEANE.

B. Deane, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

THOMAS PAINE ON THE LETTER OF JOHN JAY.

MR. DUNLAP,—In your paper of August 31st was published an extract of a letter from Paris, dated May 21st, in which the writer, among other things, says :

“It is not long since I felt, in common with every other well-wisher to the cause of liberty and truth, the obligations I was under to the author of *Common Sense*, for the able and unanswerable manner in which he has defended those principles. The same public motives, I am persuaded, induce him to address the public against Mr. Deane and his associates. The countenance and support which Deane has received is a melancholy presage of the future. Vain, assuming, avaricious, and unprincipled, he will stick at no crime to cover what he has committed, and continue his career.

“The impunity with which Deane has traduced and

calumniated Congress to their face, the indulgence and even countenance he has received, the acrimonious and uncandid spirit of the letter concerning Mr. Paine's publications, which accompanied a resolve sent to Mr. Gerard, are matters of deep concern here to every friend to America."

By way of explaining the particular letter referred to in the above, the following note was added :

"The letter here alluded to can be no other than that signed '*John Jay*,' dated January 13th, and published in Mr. Dunlap's paper of Jan. 16th. It is very extraordinary that Mr. Jay should write such a letter, because it contains the same illiberal reflections which Congress as a body had rejected from their resolve of January 12, as may be seen by any one who will peruse the proceedings of January last. Congress has since declined to give countenance to Mr. Jay's letter, for though he had a public authority for writing *a letter* to Mr. Gerard, he had no authority for the reflections he used; besides which, the latter would be perfectly laughable were every circumstance known which happened at that particular time, and would likewise shew how exceedingly delicate and cautious a President ought to be when he means to act officially in cases he is not sufficiently acquainted with."

Every person will perceive that the note which explains the letter referred to, is not a part of the letter from Paris, but is added by another person; and Mr. Jay, or any other gentleman, is welcome to know that the note is of my writing, and that the original letter from Paris is now in my possession. I had sufficient authority for the expressions used in the note. Mr. Jay did not lay his letter to Mr. Gerard before Congress previous to his sending it, and therefore, though he had their order, he had not their approbation. They, it is true, ordered it to be published, but there is no vote for approving it; neither have they given it a place in their journals, nor was it published in more than one paper in this city, except Benjamin Towne's,

tho' there were at that time two others. Some time after Mr. Jay's letter appeared in the paper, I addressed another to Congress, complaining of the unjust liberty he had taken, and desired to know whether I was to consider the expressions used in his letter as containing *their* sentiments, at the same time informing them that if they declined to approve what he had written, I should consider their silence as a disapprobation of it. Congress chose to be silent, and consequently have left Mr. Jay to father his own expressions.

I took no other notice of Mr. Jay's letter at the time it was published, being fully persuaded that when any man recollected the part he had acted, not only at the first but in the worst of times, he could but look on Mr. Jay's letter to be groundless and ungrateful; and the more so, because if America had no better friends than himself to bring about independence, I fully believe she never would have succeeded in it, and in all probability been a ruined, conquered, and tributary country.

Let any man look at the condition America was in at the time I first took up the subject, and published Common Sense, which was but a few months before the declaration of independence; an army of thirty thousand men coming out against her, besides those which were already here, and she without either an object or a system; fighting, she scarcely knew for what, and which, if she could have obtained, would have done her no good. She had not a day to spare in bringing about the only thing which could save her, A REVOLUTION, yet no one measure was taken to promote it, and many were used to prevent it; and had independence not been declared at the time it was, I cannot see any time in which it could have been declared, as the train of ill-successes which followed the affair of Long Island left no future opportunity.

Had I been disposed to have made money, I undoubtedly had many opportunities for it. The single

pamphlet, *Common Sense*, would at that time of day have produced a tolerable fortune, had I only taken the same profits from the publication which all writers have ever done, because the sale was the most rapid and extensive of any thing that was ever published in this country, or perhaps any other. Instead of which, I reduced the price so low, that, instead of getting, I stand thirty-nine pounds eleven shillings out of pocket on Mr. Bradford's books, exclusive of my time and trouble; and I have acted the same disinterested part by every publication I have made. I could have mentioned those things long ago, had I chosen, but I mention them now to make Mr. Jay feel his ingratitude.

In the *Pennsylvania Packet* of last Tuesday some person has republished Mr. Jay's letter, and Mr. Gerard's answer of the 13th and 14th of January last; and, though I was patiently silent upon their first publication, I now think it necessary, since they are republished, to give some circumstances which ought to go with them.

At the time the dispute arose respecting Mr. Deane's affairs, I had a conference with Mr. Gerard, at his own request, and some matters on that subject were freely talked over, which it is here unnecessary to mention. This was on the 2d of January.

On the evening of the same day, or the next, Mr. Gerard, though thro' the mediation of another gentleman, made me a very genteel and profitable offer. I felt at once the respect due to his friendship, and the difficulties which my acceptance would subject me to. My whole credit was staked upon going through with Deane's affairs, and could I afterwards have written with the pen of an Angel, on any subject whatever, it would have had no effect had I failed in that or declined proceeding in it. Mr. Deane's name was not mentioned at the time the offer was made, but from some conversation which passed at the time of the interview, I had sufficient reason to believe that some restraint would have been laid on that subject. Besides which I have

a natural inflexible objection to anything which may be construed into a private pension, because a man after that is no longer truly free.

My answer to the offer was precisely in these words : "Any service I can render to either of the countries in alliance, or to both, I ever have done and shall readily do, and Mr. Gerard's *esteem* will be the only recompence I shall desire." I particularly chose the word *esteem* because it admitted of no misunderstanding.

On the fifth of January I published a continuation of my remarks on Mr. Deane's affairs, and as I have ever felt the highest respect for a nation which has in every stage of our affairs been our firm and invariable friend, I spoke of France under that general description. It is true I prosecuted the point against Mr. Deane, but what was Mr. Deane to France, or to the Minister of France?

On the appearance of this publication Mr. Gerard presented a memorial to Congress, respecting some expressions used therein, and on the 6th and 7th I requested of Congress to be admitted to explain any passages which Mr. Gerard had referred to ; but this request not being complied with, I, on the 8th, sent in my resignation of the office of Secretary to the Committee of foreign affairs.

In the evening I received an invitation to sup with a gentleman, and Mr. Gerard's offer was, by his own authority, again renewed with considerable additions of advantage. I gave the same answer as before. I was then told that Mr. Gerard was very ill, and desired to see me. I replied, "That as a matter was then depending in Congress upon a representation of Mr. Gerard against some parts of my publications, I thought indelicate to wait upon him till that was determined."

In a few days after, I received a second invitation, and likewise a third, to sup at the same place, in both of which the same offer and the same invitation were



renewed, and the same answers on my part were given. But being repeatedly pressed to make Mr. Gerard a visit, I engaged to do it the next morning at ten o'clock; but as I considered myself standing on nice and critical ground, and lest my reputation should be afterwards called in question, I judged it best to communicate the whole matter to an honourable friend before I went, which was on the 14th of January, the very day on which Mr. Gerard's answer to Mr. Jay's letter is dated.

While with Mr. Gerard I avoided as much as possible every occasion that might give rise to the subject. Himself once or twice hinted at the publications, and added that "he hoped no more would be said on the subject," which I immediately waived by entering on the loss of the dispatches. I knew my own resolution respecting the offer, had communicated that resolution to a friend, and did not wish to give the least pain to Mr. Gerard by personally refusing that which from him might be friendship, but to me would have been the ruin of my credit. At a convenient opportunity I rose to take my leave, on which Mr. Gerard said, "Mr. Paine, I have always had a great respect for you, and should be glad of some opportunity of showing you more solid marks of my friendship."

I confess I felt myself hurt and exceedingly concerned that the injustice and indiscretion of a party in Congress should drive matters to such an extremity that one side or other must go to the bottom, and in its consequences embarrass those whom they have drawn in to support them. I am conscious that America had not in France a more strenuous friend than Mr. Gerard, and I sincerely wish he had found a way to avoid an affair which has been much trouble to him. As for Deane, I believe him to be a man who cares not who he involves to screen himself. He has forfeited all reputation in this country, first by promising to give an "*history of matters for the people to know*," and then not only failing to perform that

promise, but neglecting to clear his own suspected reputation, though he is now upon the spot, and can any day demand an hearing of Congress, and call me before them for the truth of what I have published respecting him.

Two days after my visit to Mr. Gerard, Mr. Jay's letter and the answer to it were published, and I would candidly ask any man how it is possible to reconcile such letters to such offers both done at one and the same time, and whether I had not sufficient authority to say that Mr. Jay's letter would be truly laughable, were all the circumstances known which happened at the time of his writing it.

Whoever republished those letters in last Tuesday's paper must be an idiot or worse. I had let them pass over without any other public notice than what was contained in the note of the preceding week, but the republishing them was putting me to defiance, and forcing me either to submit to them afresh, or to give the circumstances which accompanied them. Whoever will look back to last winter may see I had my hands full, and that without any person giving the least assistance. It was first given out that I was paid by Congress for vindicating their reputation against Mr. Deane's charges, yet a majority in that House were every day pelting me for what I was doing. Then Mr. Gerard was unfortunately brought in, and Mr. Jay's letter to him, and his answer were published to effect some purpose or other. Yet Mr. Gerard was at the same time making the warmest professions of friendship to me, and proposing to take me into his confidence, with very liberal offers. In short, I had but one way to get through, which was to keep close to the point and principle I set out upon, and that alone had rendered me successful. By making this my guide, I have kept my ground, and I have yet ground to spare; for, among other things, I have authentic copies of the despatches that were lost.

I am certain no man set out with a warmer heart or a better disposition to render public service than myself, in every thing which laid in my power : my first endeavour was to put the politics of the country right, and to show the advantages as well as the necessity of independence ; and until this was done, independence never could have succeeded. America did not, at that time, understand her own situation ; and though the country was then full of writers, no one reached the mark ; neither did I abate in my service, when hundreds were afterwards deserting her interest, and thousands afraid to speak ; for the first number of the Crisis was published in the blackest stage of affairs, six days before the taking of the Hessians at Trenton. When this state was distracted with parties, on account of her Constitution, I endeavoured, in the most disinterested manner, to bring it to conclusion ; and when Deane's impositions broke out, and threw the whole States into confusion, I readily took up the subject, for no one else understood it ; and the country now see that I was right. And if Mr. Jay thinks he derives any credit from his letter to Mr. Gerard, he will find himself deceived ; and that the ingratitude of the composition will be his reproach, not mine.

COMMON SENSE.

*The Pennsylvania Packet. Sept. 14, 1779.*

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ARTHUR LEE TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Paris, Sept. 19th, 1779.

DEAR FRIEND,—I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 1st of August a few days since, from the hands of Mr. Knox. I cannot express to you how much the late proceedings at Philadelphia have injured and degraded the character of America in Europe. You are sensible how much mischief they have done in America. There is nothing consoles me for the

particular injuries I have suffered but the consciousness of having done some, and intended more, service to our country. I did hope, that as those who went from hence were the worst of men, they would find no encouragement with you ; and I am most persuaded that the real design of those who support them is to betray their country, to which in all probability one powerful mover is the half million of guineas which I informed Congress the British Commissioners carried with them for such purposes. Time, prudence, and attention will perhaps trace and discover the application of that sum.

I have observed it to be an invariable part of Deane's policy to accuse some one else, in time, of the crime he himself has committed. When I, therefore, connect his conduct in America with his private meeting here with Paul Wentworth, Lord Mansfield's agent, who from his attempts upon me I know to be a most subtle tool of corruption, I cannot help believing he went over with his plan, to which the character and complexion of those who joined him give great credit. Among them all, there is no man more dangerous or desperately wicked than C. [Carmichael ?] Subtle, insinuating, false, persevering, and ambitious, he will assume any character and perpetrate any villainy to accomplish his purpose.

When they wrote me from Nantes of the invectives he was daily uttering against my then colleagues, and his determination to impeach them when he got over, my answer was, that it was only a stratagem to get at their sentiments, and cover his real designs against me. The event has proved I was not wrong. He appears to me to be one of those extraordinary characters, whose minds teem with incessant mischiefs to which their treachery gives a plausible cloathing, and in whose smiles there is most danger. The first time I came over to France, when they had opened my dispatches to the Secret Committee, and had probably planned the converting the supply into a Mercantile job, I was

secretly informed that they had made attempts at Versailles to shut me up, which would have ended in the loss of liberty and life. I was assured that it was actually under deliberation. I at the time regarded the information as the invention of him who gave it. But I am now satisfied that, as they apprehended that I would not only complain of their conduct, but bear witness against the attempt upon the public purse, nothing is more probable than that it was true.

Such men, supported as they are with you, and assisted from hence by the old man and his associates, are not to be trifled with ; nor is it possible to say at what atrocious acts they will not aim. This I know, that their avarice and bad ambition are boundless. They are, as you say, possessed of much sophistry, and their cunning has taught them to take their stand upon ground from which it is impossible to drive them without such a disclosure of state secrets as would hazard the great cause and our national character. Were I not restrained by this consideration, I think I could unfold to the public such facts as would ruin them forever.

In these circumstances our task is delicate and difficult. We are on a precipice surrounded on all sides with waters deep and dangerous. To balance so as to prevent their purposes on one hand, and the advantages which foes or friends may be inclined to take of our dissensions on the other, is what requires all imaginable steadiness, sagacity, and circumspection. I cannot help hoping that the arrival of M. de la Luzerne and M. Marbois, who are certainly men of honor and good intentions, will deprive them of their chief support ; and that our friend Mr. J. Adams, with many other gentlemen who went about the same time to the different states, fully impressed, from their own observation, of the conduct of the junto here, will open people's eyes ; and that a better choice of those who are to represent them in their great council will redeem us from our desperate situation. Perhaps a well-

weighed and timid protest against any mischievous measure they may carry in future, especially the exculpation of Mr. Deane, will be the means of hastening this change. It will be a deep misfortune if the name of Congress should lose of its lustre in Europe, and of its credit and confidence in America, which with such men and such measures I fear is inevitable. For myself merely, I am perfectly indifferent. I have submitted to vindicate my conduct to Congress from all Mr. Deane's aspersions. I shall trouble myself no more with these or any other, but reserve my vindication for the public at large, when times of less delicacy require less reserve.

The combined fleets of France and Spain are returned to Brest, sixty six in number, after chasing that of England of 38 into port, and taking the Ardent, a 64 gun Ship. Soon as the equinoctial season is over, they will go out again ; and if the English can possibly augment their number to nearly an equal force, there will probably ensue a conflict that must decide the war. If not, they will be blocked up, and the invasion will take place. The other Powers seem determined to preserve an exact neutrality.

I am much your debtor for the comment on my short address. That address would not have been necessary, if the conduct of Congress had not given countenance, in the opinion of all men, to Mr. Deane's absurd performance.

Commodore Gillon informs me, that he has written to Mr. President Jay the particulars of that shameful and illegal business of attaching the Alliance frigate to an amphibious squadron of French cruisers ; subjecting her to the orders of such a person as Capt. Paul Jones ; giving Continental commissions to a number of Frenchmen ; and putting them on court martials upon American officers. There is some apprehension that this information will be withheld from Congress ; as, tho' intended to be laid before them, it was not expressly so desired. The truth is, that this squadron of Jones's is a

project of Chaumont and Williams, and the matter is so artfully conducted, that they can either declare them public or private property, as may best suit their interest and future contingencies. For these private purposes, and to expose the persons and property of those Americans who went over possessed of full knowledge of the mismanagement here, the Alliance was refused them as a convoy, and withheld from rendering the essential service she might in protecting such important stores, and so much private property, as well as in defending our coast from the depredations of the enemy.

I am much obliged to you for the introduction to Dr. Gordon, whose character I respect, and whose correspondence I shall cultivate with much pleasure. Mr. J. Adams, I hope, will be immediately chosen into Congress, where he will be able to render his country very essential service from what he has seen.

It is a negotiation for a general peace, at which corrupt and interested men will have an opportunity of giving the deepest wound to the interests of our country. As this is an event which may take place soon, the earliest preparation and precaution is necessary. What lines should be drawn, what concessions can be made, what accessions should be demanded, what barriers fixed, are questions of great moment to the future peace and prosperity of America.

I am, with unalterable esteem, yours most sincerely,

ARTHUR LEE.

*Bancroft Mss., Lenox Library.*

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TO JOSEPH REED.

Philadelphia, Sept. 20th, 1779.

SIR,—Your Letter of the 4th Instant, in answer to mine of the 30th of May last, was delivered to me by your Brother, whom I fully satisfied that the demand of

Mr. Williams, and that made by me, are for distinct and separate sums of money, and by no means a double demand, as you express it. Your Brother promised me to explain the matter to your satisfaction, and to call on me in a day or two, and let me know how it should be settled. I since learn that he is gone out of town, and that without saying any thing further to me on the subject. You tell me your intention is to pay the money in case you are clearly indemnified from Mr. Williams's demand, and all the papers cancelled. I am ready to indemnify you against any demand of Mr. Williams, on account of the bill or letter of credit given your Brother, though there can not be the least possible ground for requiring any such indemnification, since, the bill taken up and cancelled, no further demand can be made thereon. And to put this matter beyond a doubt, I send you inclosed a copy of Mr. Williams' account with your Brother. Your Brother gave Mr. Williams a receipt for the ballance, on account of the Commissioners. Mr. Lee protested against allowing this ballance to Mr. Williams in the settlement of his accounts; and this, as Mr. Williams informs me, obliged him to apply to you, your Brother having promised him that, if the Commissioners did not allow it, you would repay him. It is therefore somewhat extraordinary that the payment of this money due to me should be put on the condition of my indemnifying against the demand of Mr. Williams for a different sum. In a word, Mr. Hodge, now in town, was knowing to my paying your Brother the money, and to the disinterested motives on which I did it. He was also well acquainted with your Brother's situation afterwards, at Nantes, when, after having expended the money received of me, Mr. Williams relieved him and advanced him money. Your Brother acknowledged this to be the true history of this affair when he waited on me; and, indeed, should he say otherways, Mr. Hodge, and other Gentlemen now in Philadelphia, know the facts to be as I have stated them. This being simply the case, I submit to yourself whether your insisting on



an indemnification from me against all demands of Mr. Williams, the cancelling all papers, and that I find a surety therefor, is reasonable or just. You will take your resolution as to the payment of this money or not, as you shall judge best. I only wish to know if I may depend on it or not, that a correspondence so mutually disagreeable as our present may be closed?

I am Sir, your Humble Servant,

S. DEANE.

[Enclosure.]

DR.      MR. JOHN REED *in account with* JONATHAN WILLIAMS.      CR.

1777.		1777.	
Jan'y	23 <sup>d</sup> To Cash.....	240 00	Decr 30 <sup>th</sup> By Bill of Ex-
August	2 <sup>d</sup> " ditto.....	360 00	cess, &c., on Dennis
Octob'	17 <sup>th</sup> " ditto.....	120 00	Debendt for £ 70
Nov'	29. " ditto.....	96 00	Sterling.....
Decr	13. " ditto.....	47 12	1778.
"	30. " ditto.....	960 00	Feb'y 11. By ditto on
			ditto for
			£30 St'g. 683 00
			By his or-
			der on S.
			Deane,
			Esq'.....
			600 00
			By Receipt
			on acct. of
			the Com-
			missioners
			of Con-
			gress....
			1405 00
			4272 05
			4272 05

Nantes, Feb'y 25th, 1778.

[Signed]

J. WILLIAMS.

The above is a true Copy of Mr. Williams's Account with Mr. John Reed, delivered to me by Mr. Williams at Nantes.

S. DEANE.

Thomas Mss.

## WILLIAM PACA'S REPORT ON ARTHUR LEE.

For the Pennsylvania Packet.

WHEN a part only of the proceedings in Congress on a particular subject is not only published, but also misstated [sic], and especially when the part so published is of a secret nature, and for that reason no mention is made of it in the Journals of Congress, there is the greatest room to imagine that the publication is intended to answer some insidious purpose. The subjoined paper, which is falsely styled "A Report of a Committee of Congress,"\* is of that nature; for the truth is, that Mr. Paca of Maryland, and the late Mr. Drayton of South Carolina, who actually signed the paper, were never appointed a Committee for that purpose; but officiously, and without the knowledge of Congress, and, therefore, we may presume with some sinister view, took upon themselves to wait on Mr. Gerard, and from him surreptitiously† obtained the said paper, which one of the gentlemen read and laid it on the table, and there it rested, and still rests without further notice.

As it appeared first in the New York Journal, printed

\* The paper referred to above is as follows (From the New York Journal of August 9th, printed at Poughkeepsie): For the information of the good people of the United States of America, I send you for publication a report of a Committee of Congress, made to that body on the 30th of April last. The information contained in this report, being of the highest authenticity, it is evident that Mr. Lee could do this Country no essential service as a Commissioner, either in France or Spain. What then could have induced 14 gentlemen in Congress, to vote for his continuance (22 being against it), and some of them to assert that he was the properest person to represent these States at the Court of Madrid, is hard to conceive; but how they can reconcile their conduct to their constituents, it now become necessary for them to explain. Facts speak for themselves, and are placed in a clear light, by the following report of the Committee of Congress, appointed to that business. [Here follows the report printed in Vol. 3, page 437.]

† *Surreptitiously*, because at the time of their procuring Mr. Gerard's opinion, a question was pending before Congress, "Whether Mr. Gerard should be applied to on such an occasion?" which was very properly opposed. This question had been moved by Mr. Paca, seconded by Mr. Drayton, who, after delivering at the table the subjoined paper, withdrew their first motion for enquiry. Had Mr. Gerard been fairly apprized of these circumstances, he would not have made himself a party in the factious proceedings of interested and prejudiced individuals of Congress.

at Poughkeepsie, it seems as if the publication was intended to serve some private end in that state. How far cabal and intrigue here may have had a share in the business, and whether the indirect management of Doctor Franklin and others, friends or partners in trade of Mr. Deane, drew such declaration, as is mentioned, from Count de Vergennes, I shall not now examine. I would only recommend it to those persons in the State of New York who elect the Delegates to Congress for that State to enquire,

1st. Whether any, and which, of their Delegates did urge in Congress that Mr. Duane should give a verbal narrative of his transactions in Europe, instead of a written one, notwithstanding it was represented in opposition thereto that a verbal narrative, in case he was guilty of the abuses he was suspected of, would leave him at liberty to say and unsay, to explain away and evade matters, just as it might best suit the purpose of eluding public justice.

2d. Whether any, and which, of their Delegates urged in Congress that Mr. Deane should be excused from answering questions which tended to criminate himself; a proposal which implies a conviction in the author and abettor of it, that abuses had been committed, and could have no other end than to screen the party from detection.

3d. Whether any, and which, of their Delegates voted for the recal [sic] of Mr. Izard and Mr. William Lee; and immediately afterwards also voted for this very extraordinary motion: "*That those Gentlemen be informed that it is the sense of Congress that they need not repair to America,*" by which means all enquiry and information relative to the merits and demerits of the several Commissioners, so far, at least, as an examination of those Gentlemen would throw light on the subject, were entirely cut off.

4th. Whether any, and which, of their Delegates were concerned with other persons in trade, or made proposals for that purpose which were refused.

5th. Whether any, and which, of their Delegates ever shewed improper attention to Tories, and intermeddled in the parties and politics of this State.

6th. Whether any, and which, of their Delegates communicated the aforesaid pretended Report to the Printer of the New York Journal; what his views in so doing might probably be; whether by holding up that testimony against Mr. Lee, he meant that people should from thence infer that Mr. Deane, Mr. Lee's opponent, was entirely innocent, and his own conduct, therefore, in supporting Mr. Deane, highly commendable; whereas nothing is more clear than, altho' Mr. Lee may be a very ungracious Minister, that Mr. Deane may have been a very iniquitous agent; that while both of them may deserve contempt, their respective partizans are unworthy the confidence of a free and virtuous people. Men who will deliberately go unjustifiable lengths in supporting a servant of the public, must be actuated by motives that are incompatible with the public welfare. It seems highly probable that if the honor and interest of our country had been duly attended to, that Mr. Lee would have been recalled, and Mr. Deane detained till he had rendered a satisfactory account of the vast sums of public money which have passed thro' his hand.

HONESTUS.

*The Pennsylvania Packet, Sept. 23, 1779.*

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TO SIMEON DEANE.

Philadelphia, Sept. 28th, 1779.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have not received any letter from you for several weeks, and had it not been for the setting out of Mr. Gerard and other events, I should at this time have been to meet our brother at the eastward. I set off positively to-morrow, shall return as soon as possible, and then set out to see you in Virginia, whence I propose embarking for France. A. Lee's commission

is superceded, and Mr. Jay appointed Plenipotentiary to Spain, by which the whole of the family are disposed of; though the mischief they have done is in some instances irreparable, yet their dismissal is a favorable event and gives almost universal joy. I say almost, for the Junto, though broken, are not destroyed. The removal of these men is some satisfaction to me, and in part repays me for what I have suffered, and the indignities thrown upon me whilst persuing my opposition against them. I pray to have the earliest information of the arrival of the Fier Roderigue, in which ship I hope to be able to embark for France, and have written to Mr. De Francie on the subject; pray put him in mind of it, if you see him. I have nothing particular to add, but am, as [always], My Dear Brother,

Yours,

S. DEANE.

*Ford's Correspondence of Samuel B. Webb, II. 204.*

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TO COL. SAMUEL B. WEBB.

Murderers' Creek, Oct. 15th, 1779.

MY DEAR COL. WEBB,—I promised myself the pleasure of seeing you at Head Quarters, but have been disappointed, not only of this, but of receiving any letter from you by my brother. I return to Philadelphia tomorrow, and after a short stay there, shall proceed to Virginia to embark. I shall write you from Philadelphia, and, therefore, refer you at present to my brother for particulars. I pray to hear from you by every opportunity, and that you will be assured I am ever most affectionately your sincere Friend & Very Humble Servant.

SILAS DEANE.

Col. Webb.

*Webb Papers, property of Mrs. Henry H. Oberly.*

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, Oct. 17, 1779.

\* \* \* \* \*

I AM glad to understand that Congress will appoint some person here to audit our accounts. Mine will give but little trouble, and I wish much to have them settled; and for the future I hope I shall have none to settle but what relate to my expenses.

The quarrel you mention between Mr. Deane and Mr. Lee I have never meddled with, and have no intention to take any part in it whatever. I had, and have still, a very good opinion of Mr. Deane for his zeal and activity in the service of his country; I also thought him a man of integrity. But if he has embezzled public money, or traded with it on his private account, or employed it in stockjobbing, all of which I understand he is charged with, I give him up. As yet I think him innocent. But he and his accusers are able to plead their own causes, and time will show what we ought to think of them.

\* \* \* \* \*

With great esteem, &amp;c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., Wharton Ed., III. 384.*

FROM JOSEPH REED.

[Philadelphia, Nov. 12, 1779.]

SIR,—I received yours of this morning; when my Brother returned from you he informed me that he had some papers which would be necessary to explain Mr. Williams's demand, and which he would bring or send up, but the vessel sailed without my hearing from him again. However, he declared explicitly that Mr. Williams' demand was for the money advanced on account of the £50 Sterling Bill drawn on Rumsey, which was all that was material; for, knowing the state of my own affairs, I never intended to give him a credit beyond the

£50. And I believe if you look into the letter wrote by him to you, there will not be found the most distant intimation of your advancing him money. I recommended him to your civility and notice, conceiving I had some pretensions so to do, from having been instrumental in advancing Col. Webb to be an Aid-de-Camp to General Washington, a thing which he had long wished, and I recollected how much you interested yourself in his favour in a conversation we had at a tavern in Front Street just before you sailed. The account you have sent is intirely new to me, and I cannot help being surprized that Mr. Williams, without any authority, or even a letter of recommendation, should advance such sums of money, unless he meant to do it upon the personal credit of the drawer. At this rate my Brother might have ruined me and all his friends in this Country. Nor have I any thing to add to my proposition of the 4th September. You and Mr. Williams appear connected together. He has made a demand on the same ground with yourself; surely it is reasonable, if I pay you the money, the circumstances being so unsettled, that I should be secured against a repetition of the demand by him. I have nothing to do with any other demand of Mr. Williams's but this £50, and therefore your indemnification will only reach it; and as you require definitive answer, you will please to consider this as such. The correspondence being, as you justly observe, mutually disagreeable, it is quite my wish to close it, and am, Sir,

Your very Humble Servant,

JOS. REED.

Silas Deane, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Philadelphia, November 16th, 1779.

SIR,—As I have received no answer to my memorial of the 16th of August last, I conclude none will be

given, and, consequently, that I am laid under the necessity of returning to Europe in the best manner I can, and at my own expense.

I must confess, that when I reflect on the part I have acted, and the returns made me for my services, I have nothing but the consciousness of having done my duty to my country with zeal and integrity, and of having been successful in the important affairs I engaged in, to support me. Previous to my embarking, permit me to assure Congress that my respect for them as the representative body of these States is not lessened, nor my zeal for the service, prosperity, and happiness of my country abated, by the treatment I have met with. The expense of time and money which I have suffered by my detention in this city, with the further expense I am now unavoidably forced to make, fall heavy on the small remains of a very moderate fortune; but as I go to vindicate what is dearer to me than either life or fortune, my honor and character, as the faithful servant of these States, and confident that in doing this I shall render essential services to my country, I cheerfully submit.

On the 26th of August last I received an order on the continental treasurer, signed by Joseph Nourse, for ten thousand five hundred dollars, said to be *in full consideration of my time and expenses during my attendance on Congress from the 4th of June, 1778, until the 6th day of August last.*

I mean not the least disrespect to that honorable body, nor do I feel the slightest emotions of resentment towards those of them who opposed the grant even of that sum to me; but the same feelings which prompt me to further sacrifices, forbid my acceptance of a sum so inadequate to my actual expenses, and confident that the day is not far distant in which I shall demonstrate not only that the public monies and supplies from abroad have been at first obtained principally by my agency, but that the disposition of them, so far as depended on me, was made with the utmost possible economy and perfect integrity. I refer to that time the



discussion of what recompense is due me for fourteen months' attendance in Philadelphia, in obedience to the orders of Congress, and for the other services I have been so fortunate as to render the United States. I have so often troubled Congress with my letters, and been so particular in them respecting my situation and affairs, that I need only refer to them at this time, particularly to my letter of the 22d of May last, and to submit the whole to their wise and mature consideration.

I have the honor to be, with the utmost respect to your private as well as public character, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., I. 215.*

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Annapolis, Dec. 2d, 1779.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I came to this city the night before last, having been detained by the badness of the roads and the illness of J. Sebor, who has a slight fever and cold. The rain has stopped me here since, and I wait the fair weather only to proceed. Though I have nothing material as to business to write, yet the progress I make in my journey, and my situation from time to time, will not be indifferent to you. I hope to be in Williams Burgh in five or six days, if the weather permit, where our Brother Simeon Deane was a few days since, in good health; but as to business, it is as much lottery, hazard, and uncertainty in the South as in Philadelphia and the North. The late Convention of Five States, said to have been held at Hartford, and their circular letter, has caused much speculation, and must produce great confusion here, as well as thro'out the States. To regulate prices whilst money is fixed on no certain basis is inconsistent and absurd in itself, and, of course, impracticable; but restless and feverish bodies will shift from side to side, and try every posture for relief, tho' reason and experience tell them it is to no

purpose whilst the real Cause of their malady remains untouched. This is, in fact, our present case; and as quacks in medicine never give over their experiments whilst the patient is able to swallow their potions, or whilst they can force them down his throat, so the quack politicians now swarming in every State, and in every corner of them, push on from expedient to expedient until we, their patients, may land where God only knows. I have been most hospitably entertained here by my old friend S. Chase, Esqr., who corresponds with our Simeon Deane in Virginia. As the Weather promises fair for tomorrow morning, I shall pursue my journey, and write you again soon from Williams Burgh. Meantime my love to Sister H. B. and compliments to all friends. Adieu.

S. DEANE.

B. Deane, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Williamsburgh, December 18th. 1779.

SIR,—When I did myself the honor of writing you, on the 16th of November last, the order of Congress in my favor on the Continental treasurer for ten thousand five hundred dollars being mislaid, was not enclosed. I now take the liberty to enclose it, and have the honor to be, with the most sincere respect and attachment, etc.

SILAS DEANE.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., I. 216.*

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FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, Dec. 28th, 1779.

DEAR SIR,—General Schuyler had left this city before your letter of the 29th ulto. came to hand, consequently I was deprived of the opportunity of presenting for his perusal your Narrative and Memorial, but if he returns

hither I will remember it. I am sorry you was obliged to leave your companion on the road, and fear you had but an unpleasant journey ; however, if you at length safely arrived to the end of it, and in the full enjoyment of that mirth and happiness which usually takes place at this Season, you will think yourself compensated for the trouble and fatigues you have encountered, and I very sincerely hope this is your situation ; my best wishes will attend you wherever you go, and my best services are at your command wherever you can find use for them. I am told that an embarkation of Troops has actually taken place at New York, and sailed, supposed to be destined Southward, but no certainty of their destination. We have a report here that Pensacola is taken by the Spaniards ; should it be true, perhaps that event may claim Sir Harrys attention and disconcert his schemes a little.

As we have no news, and I dislike to write politicks, I shall not take up your time, except to tell you that your friends here are well, and to request my compliments to Col. Harrison, Col. Banister, and such others of my friends and acquaintance as you fall in with.

I am, very truly, Dear Sir, your obedt. Servt.,

ROBT. MORRIS.

Silas Deane, Esqr.  
Virginia.

*Thomas Mss.*

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PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

*Philadelphia, Thursday, January 13, 1780.* A letter of the 18th [of Dec.] from Silas Deane was read, inclosing the warrant in his favour, dated August the 26th, 1779, for ten thousand five hundred dollars, which he returns, agreeably to the intimation in his letter of November 16th.

*Ordered,* That the warrant be sent to the Board of Treasury, and there cancelled.

*Journals of Congress.*

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Passy, Jan. 27, 1780.

\* \* \* \* \*

I THANK you for your information relating to the batteries opened against me in America. I since hear that a motion has been made in Congress, by a Carolina member, for recalling me, but without success; and that A. Lee has printed a pamphlet against me. If my enemies would have a little patience they may soon see me removed without their giving themselves any trouble, as I am now seventy-five. I know not what they can mean by saying that I opposed the settling of Mr. Deane's accounts. I have no interest to induce such opposition, and no opposition has been made. The Congress appointed Mr. Johnson of Nantes to audit them; he refused the service, and Mr. Deane was, till very lately, absent.

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*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., Wharton Ed., III. 476.*

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, March 4, 1780.

\* \* \* \* \*

I HAVE sent to Mr. Johnson the vote of Congress relative to the settlement of the accounts. He has expressed his readiness to enter on the service. Mr. Deane is soon expected here, whose presence is very necessary, and I hope with his help they may be gone through without much difficulty. I could have wished it had suited Mr. Lee to have been here at the same time.

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*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., Wharton Ed., III. 536.*

FROM BENEDICT ARNOLD.

Philadelphia, March 22, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you the 8th ulto. by Colonel White, since which I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you. I now take the liberty of transmitting to you the proceedings of the Court Martial on my Trial, which I must beg the favour of you to have translated into French and published when you arrive in France, and dispersed wherever you think necessary, the expense of which I will repay you with thanks. I believe you will be equally surprised with me, when you find the Court Martial have fully acquitted me of the charge of employing public waggons, of defrauding the public, or of injuring or impeding the public service, and in the next sentence say, "as requests from me might operate as commands, I ought to receive a reprimand." For what? Not for doing wrong, but because I might have done wrong; or, rather, because there was a possibility that evil might have followed the good I did. I believe their sentence will, in future, prevent any officer from employing public waggons to remove private property, however necessary it may be.

Two days ago Mrs. Arnold presented me a fine son. She is remarkably well, and joins me in best respects to you.

I have proposed to the Board of Admiralty an expedition which will require three or four hundred land forces to act in conjunction with the ships; the matter rests with General Washington. If the men can be spared, and my plan takes place, you will hear from me soon. If it should not, I propose going to Boston, with the intention to take the command of a private ship.

I shall be happy to hear from you at all times, being very sincerely and affectionately, Dear Sir,

Your friend and Humble Servant,

B. ARNOLD.

P. S.—Please to present my best respects to your Brother.

Hon. S. Deane, Esq.

*Ms. Harvard University.*

FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, March 31st, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—I expect this will find you near ready to embark for France, and as M. de Francy goes with you, I have thought it proper and prudent to send him copies of your letter and my own to Mr. de Beaumarchais respecting my money in his hands. He received by the Luzerne, Capt. Bell, the originals, and may possibly have paid the money, as I desired, to my bankers in Paris; but if he has not, I hope upon your representations, aided by M. de Francy's, may procure it being done without farther trouble to me and without any longer delay. I ordered it into the hands of Messrs. Le Coulteulx and Company of Paris, and hope you will see it lodged with these Gentlemen on my account when you are in Europe.

I would have you inform yourself well whether it is practicable to make sale of vacant lands in America by sending our drafts or surveys, descriptions and certificates, to ascertain the situation, qualities of the land, title, ect., and in what part of the continent lands are most desired by such persons as would be inclined to speculate, for I am ready to join you in any operations of this kind that would turn advantageously to ourselves, as well as those who may purchase from us, and I would not wish to engage in it on any other terms.

Reflecting on the unrestricted abuse you have suffered, and not knowing whether you have any evidence with you to shew that your particular friends were not infected with the pestilence of the times, I have suddenly and hastily scribbled a letter to Dr. Franklin in which I have expressed pretty concisely the sentiments due to him, you, and myself. I consider that we have been fellow laborers in the vineyard, and although our works will speak for themselves before that impartial master who knows all actions and the secret springs that give rise to them, yet the evidence of one honest man in favor of another is but too often necessary to protect virtue

and innocence against the shafts of malice and envy in this short-sighted world.

In short, if you think that letter ought to be delivered, deliver it ; if not, you may suppress it. For my part, it is the mere dictate of the honest sentiments, and unless it will answer a good purpose, I would not have you put it to any use whatever.

I have not any news to tell you as to political points ; I don't like to meddle with them. However, I may say that the affairs of finance are not well understood in Congress, and their regulations, meant for the best, generally operate badly. That is like to be the case in the last instance, but the thing will bring its own remedy like most disorders in the human body that arise from repletion.

The fever that threatens destruction, brings about a purification that restores the patient to good health. So in this redundancy of paper circulation, after all the feverish palliations of restrictions, regulations, limitations, ect., are found ineffectual, they will be universally condemned, cool taxation will take place, and common sense—not you friend *Common Sense*—take place in the minds of the people. Then, and not till then, will our finances be put in the train that they ought to be.

This, I think, is now the most formidable enemy we have to contend with ; but still I wish for an honorable and speedy peace. Mrs. Morris joins me in wishing you health, happiness, and safety, for the same reason we think you deserve these enjoyments.

I am Sir, your Friend and Servt.,

ROBERT MORRIS.

Silas Deane, Esqr.

*Deane Papers, Conn. Hist. Society.*

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FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, March 31, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—The packet enclosed herewith is from my worthy friend John Shee, whom you must remem-

ber, and I think if you do, you will recollect that he is deserving of that esteem and friendship which most of his acquaintance, as well as myself, entertain for him. He has a large family to provide for, and with more patriotism than prudence (his circumstances considered) he lent too much of his property to the public, thereby cramping himself in the prosecution of mercantile business. By my advice he has deposited the Loan Office Certificates mentioned in his papers (being only a part of what he professes) in the French Consuls office, and I promised to interest you in accomplishing an advantageous sale of them in Europe. I am sure you will comply with this request, and I promise gratefull acknowledgements and returns for your services, both by Mr. Shee and myself. He will request you to deposit the money arising from the sale of these Certificates in the hands of a banker in Paris, advising Messrs. Jonathan Nesbitt & Co., of L'Orient of your proceedings from time to time, & subjecting the said money to their drafts, as they are to ship Goods out to Mr. Shee for the amount ; it is also probable they may put of some of these Certificates in payment for goods, respecting which I think they and you had best to correspond.

I am, Dear Sir, your affectionate Friend and Obedt. Hble Servt.,

ROBT. MORRIS.

Silas Deane, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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ROBERT MORRIS TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, March 31st, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I do not know that what I am now going to write is in the least degree necessary, or that Mr. Deane will thank me for it, but the thought has just struck me, that as he has constantly and invariably manifested a warm attachment to your person and character, in his examination before Congress, in his publi-



cations, and in all his private conversations at which I have been present, it might be some satisfaction to you and him to have a testimony of this kind from a friend to you both, who, having nothing to seek or ask for himself, can mean nothing but to promote that harmony and friendship which he wishes to continue in existence between two worthy men ; I consider Mr. Deane as a martyr in the cause of America. After rendering the most signal and important Services, he has been reviled and traduced in the most shameful manner. But I have not a doubt the day will come when his merit shall be universally acknowledged, and the authors of those calumnies held in the detestation they deserve.

My own fate has been in some degree similar. After four years indefatigable service, I have been reviled and traduced for a long time by whispers and insinuations which at length were fortunately wrought up to public charges, which gave me an opportunity to shew how groundless, how malicious, these things were ; how Innocent and honest my transactions. My enemies, ashamed of their persecution, have quitted the pursuit, and I am in the peaceable possession of the most honourable station my ambition aspires to, that of a private citizen of a Free State. Yourself, my good Sir, have had a share in these calumnies, but the malice which gave them vent was so evident as to destroy its own poison ; they could not cast even a cloud over your justly and much revered character. These things have taught me a lesson of philosophy that may be of service. I find the most usefull members of society have most enemies, because there are a number of envious beings in the human shape ; and if my opinion of mankind in general is grown worse from my experience of them, that very circumstance raises my veneration for those characters that justly merit the applause of virtuous men. In this light I view Doctor Franklin and Mr. Deane ; and under this view of them, I assert, with an honest confidence, that I have a just and equitable title to a return of that friendship which I think it is honourable to profess for

them with that degree of truth and affection which impresses me to it.

I am, Dear Sir, Your most obedient and very humble Servt.

ROBT. MORRIS.

His Excellency Benj. Franklin, Esqr.  
Minister Plenipotentiary, Paris.

*Holbrooke Mss.*

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TO JOHN BANISTER.

Williamsburg, April 8th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—My brother was not able to effect anything at Richmond, tho' he waited several days for the purpose. Mr. Southall told him, as we went up, that he had between three and four hundred hogsheads of tobacco on account of the Company. On his return to Richmond he could obtain no decisive or direct account about it, and, in short, they seemed disposed to trifle with him. As I am very anxious to have this matter settled, I must intreat of you to go over to Richmond and urge the matter in person. You being interested equally with myself, and as desirous as I am to have it closed, makes me take the liberty to urge you to take this trouble on you. We have nothing new here; the Fier Roderique is almost loaded. My most respectful compliments wait on Mrs. Banister, and wishes for your prosperity and happiness.

I am, with much esteem, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.

S. DEANE.

Col. Banister.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN HOLKER.

Williamsburg, April 17th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received your favors inclosing a letter from Mr. Bromfield, and should have done myself the

honor of writing on that ; and several other subjects before this ; but hearing Bromfield was at Portsmouth, I sent the letter to him, and expected his answer to forward to you, when, to my surprize, I learned a few days since that he was actually sailed for France, and whither before or after the receipt of the letter I know not. I took the liberty of accompanying the letter with one from me, reproving him for his neglect, and urging an immediate settlement if he arrive in France ; as he carries out effects with him, there can be no difficulty. You mentioned to my Brother in your letters the trunk of silks, and the bills I drew on Mr. Grand. As to the former I have repeatedly written Monsr. Chaumont on that subject, and informed him of the arrangements I had taken ; some one of those letters must have come safe to his hands, and met with his approbation. I hope now to see him sooner than any accounts can be transmitted. As to the bills, it is impossible that any difficulty can arise, for I remitted long since to Mr. Grand, immediately after our proposed adventure from St. Eustatia failed, your bills, to the amount of those I drew in your favor. I hope to get away in three weeks at farthest, and shall be happy if I can render you any service in France, in return for the many friendly offices you have done me there, as well as in this country. If none fall within my narrow sphere, you have at least my best wishes for your health, happiness, and prosperity ; and that after having served your King and country faithfully in America, you may meet with those honors and rewards which I well know you merit, and which will not, I am confident, be refused you by the generous Prince you serve. I shall [send] you a parting letter, and possibly a long one, before I [set out]. I therefore will only add to this that I am ever, with much respect and attachment, your sincere Friend and very Hble Servt.,

S. DEANE.

Hon. John Holker, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO RICHARD ADAMS AND TURNER SOUTHALL.

Williamsburg, April 17, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,—We embrace this opportunity by Monsr. Audaine to pray that you would send us a state of the accompts of Adams, Deane & Co. ; we are equally interested to have them settled, and, expecting to leave America in a few weeks, at farthest early in May, are equally anxious to have that concern adjusted previous to our sailing for Europe. As we learn that little or no business has for some time past been done on behalf of the company, we conclude that little or no time is requisite for the adjusting and closing its affairs, and that they are before this compleated. Your sending the accounts by the first post, and a copy by Monsr. Audaine, will much oblige us.

We remain respectfully, Gentlemen, your most Obedt. and Hble Servts.,

S. DEANE.

LAZARUS DE VRANEY.

Messrs. Adams & Southall.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN SHEE.

Williamsburgh, April 17th, 1780.

SIR,—I received yours of the 29<sup>th</sup> ulto. with the accounts of certificates enclosed, and will attend to your directions as to the disposal of them. The Fier Rodrique is now nearly loaded, and I hope will not be obliged to wait for any thing after the first week in next month. Should you have any further command in France, shall be glad to hear from you. Mr. Morris will write me after, and your letters inclosed in his will not fail of reaching me.

I am, with respect, Sir, yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. John Shee.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Postscript of a letter to Robert Morris, Esqr. (Copy of the letter on file.)

[Williamsburgh, April 17, 1780.]

I RESUME my pen to say one word on the subject of vacant lands mentioned in yours. It is what I have considered after, and will be the first, or one of the first, objects of my attention in Europe. My general acquaintance, not so much among merchants, on this subject, as with gentlemen of another order, who, whilst they wish to increase their fortunes, are too ignorant, as well as proud and indolent, to engage in commerce, will enable me, I think, to do something in that way, if anything in an honorable way can be done ; and unless this traffic can be in that stile, neither of us would, on any terms, be concerned. I have cast often in my mind what part of our vacant land would be at once the most inviting and advantageous to foreigners. I am still at a loss to determine. Most men attend but to the present moment, and to them the most immediate profit is captivating. East of Hudson's River and North of N. England, taking the continent into our view, will be the strongest, the healthiest, and, if we include Canada and Nova Scotia in this land scape, the most populous, and ultimately the richest part of these States; but this must be the work of ages, [to] contemplate it as a great object, just perceptible through the confusion, and storms of several centuries. Here there is no pre[sent] [tem]pting object to private adventurers. The land West of Hudson's River and North of Pennsylvania are good in their soil, and the lakes and waters there communicating with Hudson's River, the Delaware, the Susquehannah, and with the waters of Canada, give them every way the preference to the former. Indeed, I know of no inland Country that exceeds it in point of situation ; but the soil and

climate are unquestionably good, and settlers on these lands will reap more immediate advantages than in almost any other, everything considered ; but the climate is cold and the country mountainous. These are capital objections with most of the European adventurers, whose object is a sudden and easy acquisition of interest, but they are of but little weight with men who mean to settle themselves and provide for their descendants on those lands. The next prospect we have of vacant lands are those South and Westward of the last, and are, first, the great tract between the western frontiers or mountains of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina (South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida are not to be taken into consideration), and the River Ohio. This is a fine country, of prodigious extent, and in high estimation in Europe ; tho', in fact, it is on several accounts less valuable than the last mentioned tracts, and every way inferior to that contained between the River Ohio and Mississippi. You will, perhaps, demand my reasons for this assertion. I began to write a post script of one side only, and I am already on a subject which, if fully treated, requires a small volume rather than a letter. No matter, you will find some leisure moments to read it. If not, it will light a segar and help to your pleasure and amusement one way, at least. Neither the country on the East, nor that on the West side of the Ohio, can ever receive any advantages of commerce, either in importation or exportation ; but by the Mississippi or Canada, and the country on the West side the Ohio, is the best situated for either. The lands are equal, if not superior, in goodness, and is better watered, and the settlers will not be exposed to those violent civil contentions as those on this side of the Ohio will inevitably be, and that within a very few years. The seeds are already sown, and the fatal harvest is sure, unless something next to miraculous prevent. The other States will dispute with Virginia about the Ohio, or, as they call them, Kentucky, lands. The inhabitants are a set of hardy, unpolished hunters,

living at this time without any other law or police than what necessity and fear of the Indians dictates. They already meditate independence of Virginia, and what little submission they profess to it is merely temporary and unsubstantial. This is the general view I have of vacant lands on this continent. In the second division I think a speculation will answer well, and in the last, in the third, I have not so high an opinion of it, for the reasons I have given, and from the most perfect intelligence which I have obtained since my being here from many of the actual inhabitants at Kentucky, who have been down here the last winter. Tho' they are cautious and will not publickly avow their intentions, yet being more unguarded to me as a stranger and disinterested person, I know they are determined that absentees shall not hold large tracts of land among them without settling and defending them. You can easily conceive how popular such a doctrine must be the moment they have power to put it in practice. Their strength is daily increasing. They have now at least three thousand men fit to bear arms on the spot, and they are perfect Tartars, for they live solely on meat. Their children, as soon as weaned, are fed with Bear and Buffaloe, if not raw, at most not half-roasted. These inhabitants have not—you may be surprized, but it is a fact—had one mouthful of bread amongst them for near six months past. Judge, then, what a race of men are coming forward. However, I submit it to your judgment where the best speculations can be made; but I think the most immediately profitable ones are those in the second division, the greatest but more distant, between the Ohio and the Mississippi. Wherever you purchase and wish to sell again in Europe, be careful to have a good draught or chart and description of them, and let them be such as you will wish to sell a part and retain a part. The holding a part yourself will be an inducement to foreigners to become interested. The lands being judiciously chosen, one half or less may be sold for the purchase money and the residue kept for a higher

market or for improvement. If you approve of these outlines, I will take an Interest with you in any purchases you make of lands, with the view of disposing of in this way ; and as soon as you hear of my sailing, send on letters for me on the subject. I cannot procure funds for the payment of the interest you may give me in them until some time after my arrival ; but as I sell, will pay the money to your order in Europe. I pray you to write me in answer to this ; for tho' I hope to be gone before your letters come to hand, yet it is as probable I may not, and, at any rate, the letter may soon follow me.

Adieu.

S. DEANE.

Mr. Robert Morris.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ISAAC MOSES.

Williamsburg, April 17th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—My last was the 28th of March, since which I have none of your favors ; the Fier Roderique is almost loaded, and my patience long since exhausted. Tobacco is now at 50 $\text{℥}$  and rising, or, rather, money falling. The inclosed hand bill is from a gentleman of my acquaintance in Charleston. You may before this have later news ; however, I send you this, and wish it was better. If the enemy come to these Capes, I have reason to apprehend the worst ; no troops, a few batteries, but no body to fight them. A scattered militia with few arms, but neither ammunition or provisions [cipher translated], and the people despising Congress, and disaffected. In a word, the affairs of Virginia are as bad as is possible.

The late resolutions of Congress begin to affect everything here, whether for the better a short time will determine ; at present no one is fond of dealing in anything but tobacco, and the traders mark their goods at so many pounds of tobacco per pound, &c., instead of so many shillings or pounds. As the schooner Chance



sailed early in March, I hope to hear from her before I sail ; if she return safe I will leave it with you to keep her going in the manner you judge best for our mutual interest. My brother lately purchased the third of a fine brigantine and 250 hogsheads of molasses ; the cargo is selling at Baltimore, and the brigantine fitting out for Gottenburgh or elsewhere to the north of Europe. Have you correspondents there ? If so, send me their names and a letter to them ; enclose it to my Brother. The Brigantine arriving safe will change her owners and go to St. Eustatia ; this may be to our mutual advantage. Have you heard from Tallmadge about the affair at New York ? Write me in your next how the late resolutions of Congress affect you. If I am gone, your letter can soon follow me. I shall write you again before I sail ; meantime, I am, with esteem, Dear Sir, yours, &c.,  
S. DEANE.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Williamsburg, April 20th, 1780.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I received yours of the 27th ulto. yesterday. Is paper scarce, or is your time too precious to spare more than for six or eight lines to an absent Brother ? I hope in ten days to set my face for Europe ; my heart has long since been sick, not of America, but with distress for her. Our Phaetons, like their predecessors, have shewn themselves able to set a world on fire, and not how to enlighten and govern it ; and, as they have the goal in full view, strain every nerve to reach it, and to acquire the glory of running our public faith, honor, and credit out of breath. I am really ashamed of Mr. Hancock's conduct, and dare not write to him least I should say something harsh to a man I have respected, and whom I ought to pity, if real necessity is the cause of his trifling with me ; but his refusal to answer my letters, after advancing near three hun-

dred pounds sterling to serve him, is without excuse, and is a conduct unworthy either of gentleman or merchant. Write him and tell him you have it in orders from me to have the bills protested, and the debt put in suit if he trifles any longer on the subject ; the money received pay the whole to Isaac Moses, taking his receipt therefor, a duplicate of which inclose me, to care of our brother here. Our Simeon Deane has made one or two lucky strokes this winter, in which something handsome will be cleared. The partnership of Adams, Deane & Co. is dissolved ; the depreciation and other unfavorable circumstances rendered it of but little profit. Charlestown, I fear, is gone, and with it the State, for the present ; and as I have been for some time the sport of cross accidents, I am not without fear of our being blocked up in this bay. I dare not in imagination realise so distressing an event ; it would render me almost desperate. I have seen authentic accounts from Charlestown to the 2d instant ; they were then besieged, and in but an indifferent state of defence. Here we are in a state most absolutely undefenceable, and if the enemy arrive with any force, every thing in the lower parts of Virginia must be at their mercy. This country is intersected with great rivers from one to three miles over, and navigable for ships of the line far up, the inhabitants scattered and but badly armed. The State of Virginia has not a town or city (tho' they have many cities) so populous or well built as Middletown or Wethersfield, and the rich planters live many miles from each other in most parts. You may travel often in the heart of Virginia from five to ten miles without seeing a single house or field. The gentlemen are men of spirit, are hospitable, and live high when the means are in their power ; the lower order are indolent, poor, and I may almost say uncivilized. Their slaves are the wealth and support of the first order ; and the second, the moment they can purchase or hire a slave or two, leave off labor and imitate their superiors in dissipation and gaming, the fatal vice of all, a very few excepted. The man who

means to be happy himself, and to enjoy the pleasure of seeing the human race happy around him, has no right to go farther southward than Philadelphia, if so far. Gain only can tempt a sensible man to exceed those limits. I have a letter from Jonathan Williams in France of November last, which tells me my son was well ; I feel much for him, my only hope, and almost the sole object I wish to live for ; my other family connections are dear to me, but they are (thank God) capable of providing for themselves, and are in a good way. If any accident happen to me, my son must *be* yours, and our brother Simeon Deane's. I need not remind you of past occurrences in our lives, to urge you to the most attentive and parental care of him ; it would argue a doubt of your gratitude and fraternal affection. You will think I write this in a gloomy, desponding turn of mind. I do not, but I am not gay. I am sorry to see others so when our public prophets are so serious and alarming, but I do not despond ; a consciousness of the rectitude of my intentions and the disinterestedness of my conduct support me, and I trust will, to the last, whatever may happen.

At York, June 2d. I came to this place yesterday to embark. The uncertainty I have been in since writing the above has prevented my writing, but I am really surprized at your silence. I have written a very long letter, 36 pages, to Congress ; sent it open to Mr. Wilson to peruse and deliver ; a copy will be left with our Simeon Deane. I have demonstrated in that what injustice has been done me, and remonstrated, they perhaps will think too freely. You have formerly asked me how you should employ what money you held of mine, and what might arise from the sales of my furniture. I would have you interest me to the amount in any adventures of yours you judge most promising, until you hear from me ; if Mr. Webb continues to refuse to accept the terms I offered, pray obtain of him, the accounts made out by Joyce the winter before I left Wethersfield, and a list of the notes and bonds in my

name left in his hands at that time. I would willingly suffer much to settle and close with him, for I am sorry to find he thinks himself intitled to all I ever have or may hereafter labor for, or, what is the same thing, that it should go into his hands in a hodge podge, common stock way. I pray I may be mistaken; but I think, after figuring away awhile, and blowing up his brethren with the notions of fortune and quality, all will be dissipated, disappear, and then he will amuse the world and gratify my enemies by laying all on me.

It is in vain to look back. I have enough to do to look forward, and ward against future strokes. I have written to him and send you the letter open; seal and deliver it, but first take a copy. I keep one, but it may be lost. You will find among my papers, inventories of all the estate of Mr. Webb, and accounts made out by Joyce under my direction, ready to settle. You will also find an inventory of the notes, &c., payable to me; pray obtain and preserve them. You will, I expect, regularly credit me for the use and improvement of my interest in your hands at what it may be worth. I have left, among other papers in the hands of our Simeon Deane, an estimate of my accounts against these States, more particular than what I left you. I sent you, when I went abroad before, my will; I have now made a new one, therefore destroy that. I suppose my late wife was buried near my first. I desire you to erect a table to her Memory, of the same fashion as the first; and when you do it, acquaint the family, and let them direct the inscription; as I shall be absent, it will be more proper for them to do this last office for one whose memory is equally dear to them and me. I believe I mentioned to you the outlines of my plan if I arrive safe in France. I have been more particular with our Simeon Deane here. I propose without delay to carry my son to Geneva and fix him there, at least for four years—it will not cost me much over one hundred sterling per annum—and then put him to that business which may best suit his inclination and improvement. Should any thing fatal

happen to me, I must pray you to execute this plan as to him, and indeed it may in such case be necessary for one of you to go to France, as well on his account as to finish what affairs I may have unclosed and unsettled ; but I will not anticipate. I hope very soon to receive your letters in France, and that you will be a more punctual correspondent to me there than whilst in Virginia. My compliments to all friends, in particular to General Saltonstall's family. I wrote him and son Dudley by Capt. Rogers of Brantford, but received no answer. Just tell me what became of D. Saltonstall's affair. My love to sister H. Buck.

I am, with true fraternal affection and friendship, dear brother, yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

B. Deane, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ISAAC MOSES.

Williamsburg, April 20th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received your favor of the 11th and note the contents. I am greatly surprized at the protest of my bills. I left in Mr. Grand's hands on my leaving Paris, by his own account, signed, more than thirty thousand livres, and impowered him to receive a still greater, than my due ; except your bills, and those I drew in favor of Mr. Holker, I have not drawn on him. Mr. Holker gave me bills on Mr. Chaumont to the amount of those I gave him, which, on our proposed Sugar voyage failing, were remitted by your house in St. Eustatia to Mr. Grand for my account ; but as I left power with Chaumont to dispose of my funds, I perceive the cause of my treatment, under which I am not easy, but must be patient. My Brother wrote me many weeks since that Mr. Hancock had accepted my bills, they were to almost three hundred pounds sterling ;

this money he will pay you. For the deficiency on the bill account, I will make provision in Europe immediately on my arrival. You say the expense of the schooner run us in debt 30,702. 6. 1., and that my share is £5,140. 9. 2. But as I am one third owner it must be 10,267. 8. 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ , which, with the former ballance, I will make good, as the money was at the time of advancing the same. But as the schooner, accidents excepted, must be now on her return, I do not incline to sell ; if she return I am content to sell my third with the rest, and that out of the returns you disburse yourself, accounting with my brother Simeon Deane therefor ; if she fail in her return, I will enable him in my absence to account to you therefor. I have already sent you copy of the Loan Office Certificates, and a certificate of your interest in them, but I will, before I sail, send you a copy of the Consul's Certificate to me, indorsed to you. I had little hopes of them before I received the intelligence you sent me from M. Myers. The credit of Congress with foreigners has long since been lost, and deservedly ; is it much better with the Americans ? I know not how it is with you, it is absolutely gone to the Southward. I have seen letters and accounts from Charlestown to the 2d. The town was then invested by sea and land, except on Cooper River, by which a communication was then open, but expected hourly to be closed. The gentleman who writes, appears to be in low spirits, therefore may possibly paint things darker than they are ; yet I know him to be a man of veracity, and a friend, and if the scene is half as dark as he paints it, it is gloomy enough. The Fier Roderique is now within a few hogsheads loaded, and as soon as the other ships join her, which will be in the course of ten days, we shall sail, if happily we are ahead of the enemy.

I am, with esteem, yours, etc.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SAMUEL CHASE.

Williamsburg, April 23d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you a long letter the 28th ulto. and made no use of our cypher ; not having any letter from you since, gives me some uneasiness. Pray let me know if you received it. For news I refer you to the papers. I saw a letter from Charlestown the 30th of March, which leaves me no hopes for that place, except what arise from the bare possibility of some lucky chance of war. If the enemy succeed, they will be in this bay in the course of next month in force. Georgia is totally gone, and the common people in the back of South Carolina have many of them taken the oaths to the King of Great Britain, and accepted of a neutrality from the moment the town falls. The whole State is gone ; and when we shall recover that State or Georgia is uncertain. [Cipher translated.] The actual situation of Virginia is affecting, a great languor and in difference has succeeded every order of Congress in Virginia. In one word, the enemy will find no body to oppose them here, nor do I believe that a gun will be fired at them in Carolina, that is in the lower parts. You know best how it is with you. The enemy masters of Charlestown, and strongly posted at Portsmouth, will at pleasure lay all the low countries of Virginia, North Carolina, and the whole eastern shore under contribution and at their mercy, and become masters of the sole remaining staple of our commerce. Lee is still in Berlin. Letters from Bancroft, as to remittances, are very discouraging. Spain begins to suffer heavily. Gibraltar is relieved, and the fleet of Spain defeated. These are disagreeable subjects. I hope to sail at farthest in fifteen days ; this is some relief, but I shall leave this country with a heavy and forboding heart. I have had the fortune of Cassandra hitherto ; my predictions have [been] universally disbelieved and disregarded, and yet, unfortunately, have been fulfilled.

Our Phaetons, like their predecessor, know how to set a world on fire, but not how to hold the reins of government, any more than he to manage those of the Chariot of the Sun. I find they drive at present furiously, and cast behind them honor, credit, and national faith, as too cumbrous for them in their race. Is it difficult to see where they will land us? Will it not be in a chaos and confusion, thro' which it appears to me that no human eye can penetrate? If, happily, yours can, and if you discover a safe landing, pray comfort me with an account of it. I depend on your answer to this before I sail, and therefore do not delay of writing. May you be happy, let what will happen to one who esteems you, and is with great sincerity, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P.S.—You have seen in Dunlap's paper a pretended letter from General Clinton; it deserves no notice in itself, but much from the effect it must have. The people, both high and low, catch at it as something of the utmost importance, and count on it as a certain information that the enemy will soon be driven from the continent; they congratulate each other, and spread the joyful news round the country. The more sensible and observing give it a second reading and examine it; they find it spurious. Meantime General Clinton by his operations gives it the lie, and the spirits of the people, raised without grounds, sink in proportion below the just standard, and finally disbelieve every thing, however well founded. This is the fruit of such publications. They are useful at times, and under certain circumstances; but never unless conducted by a masterly hand, who can defy detection until the important purpose aimed at is fully obtained.

Mr. Samuel Chase.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO JOHN BAPTISTE LAZARUS THEVENEAU DE FRANCY

Williamsburg, Sunday, April 24th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Rose could not wait on you, and business prevented me. I have seen and discoursed with a sensible gentleman from Charlestown late in March ; his account confirms the description which our friend Lastagette gives, and leaves me not a doubt of the fate of the town. My friend, do not be amused with a pretended letter from General Clinton. I am surprized that any one can be deceived by so gross and palpable forgery, yet the multitude are catching at it, as if it was a genuine letter ; be assured it is a forgery calculated to keep up the spirits of the people, and rely upon it, the enemy have lately received a strong reinforcement from New York, and are determined, immediately after the reduction of Charlestown, to come into this bay ; this renders every moment precious and important, if we would escape the enemy, who will, most undoubtedly, if they succeed to the southward, be here by the middle of the next month. I have given you this intelligence, not to alarm you, and I know you do not willingly lose any time, but to advise you to sacrifice every lesser consideration to the important one of escaping them.

I am most sincerely and with much esteem, Dear Sir, yours &c.,

S. DEANE.

Monsr. De Francý.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC MOSES.

Williamsburg, April 28th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you the 20th, since which am favored with yours of the 14th inclosed to my Brother, who is now at Portsmouth. Must refer you to my last, in which I have taken notice of the ballance due you. As the schooner Chance sailed early in March, if no accident happens to her, I hope she may return ; but

wish you may not have ordered her into this bay. A sloop of twelve guns and a brigantine of sixteen took a ship of the Capes, which was a prize to the Baltimore fleet, and ordered in here. The privateers are said to belong to Goodrich, and a man just from Norfolk says that a boat of two swivels, and small arms only, had taken five of the shallops going up the bay. As these shallops can be of little or no value to the captor, and as this boat cannot expect to take any of our sea vessels, I conjecture her to be a spy boat after intelligence ; tho', as the enemy have certainly many friends and correspondents near the Capes, I knew not why she ventured up the bay so far. No intelligence from Charlestown, my anxiety is inexpressible. Mr. De Francy is gone for the last time up the river to close all affairs and hasten away ; yet from a trifling, indecisive method of doing business on one side, and the most provoking delays on the other, I have every thing to fear. Inclosed is the copy of the deposit, attested by the Consul here, with my certificate at bottom. I have no tobacco, but will consult my Brother on his return. It is now at fifty pounds Virginia currency pr. ct., and no body fond of selling for paper at that ; they barter almost intirely at present. How goes on the new scheme of finance ? Cornwallis in, and Charlestown blocked up (God forbid it should happen), but if it should, where shall we be ? I am led to presume the schooner arrived safe, as a Captain from thence says they all got in to St. Eustatia. The loss of the ship with the brass cannon is unlucky, as a part would have helped us towards expences. Should the schooner be so fortunate as to return before I sail, shall write you on the subject ; if not, will leave directions with my Brother to write you. I shall probably write you once more before I sail.

Meantime, I remain with respect, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

[Enclosure.]

Williamsburg, April 28th, 1780.

I CERTIFY that Mr. Isaac Moses, of the City of Philadelphia, is interested in the forgoing Certificates to [the] amount of Forty Thousand Dollars, which I received to dispose of to best advantage for him. Twenty Thousand are the property of a friend of his, received as above, and forty Thousand my private property ; and, in case of loss of the forgoing original, I hereby empower the said Isaac Moses to call for and receive the whole of said Loan Office Certificates, to be accountable for Forty Thousand thereof, and the interest arising thereon, to me or my order. In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the day and year above named.

[Seal.]

SILAS DEANE.

Test.—Jacob Sebor.

*Thomas Mss.*


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TO RICHARD ADAMS AND TURNER SOUTHALL.

Williamsburg, May 2d, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,—Your favor of the 25th is before me. Neither Mr. De Francy nor my Brother are in town, yet I can but make one or two observations for your reflection. When I was at Richmond last February with Col. Banister, Col. Adams must remember that it was then agreed to close the partnership ; that he then told us the whole could be closed and settled in a few days, as there were no outstanding debts ; that it was then advised, and agreed to by Col. Adams, that what money was on hand should be instantly laid out in tobacco or other articles. When last at Richmond I had not the pleasure of seeing Col. Adams, and was surprized to hear that the Company had a considerable sum of money on hand, every hour sinking in value. Col. Southall informed [me] that a large quantity of tobacco was on hand, and that the

Company's accounts should be drawn out without delay. My Brother returned from Petersburg to obtain them, and a general state of the joint concerns ; he waited several days to no purpose. On the point of leaving the Continent, Mr. De Francy and self applied directly to you, in answer to which we are told the accounts are not ready, and are referred to my Brother for a sight of letters which passed between you and him, and to form our judgment on a dispute between you ; this is the more surprizing, as you cannot have forgot that my Brother had the misfortune to loose all his papers, and among them, letters and copies referred to in yours, and that you are in possession of the originals of his and the copies of your letters. I am well acquainted with the general history of the transaction you refer to ; I am too nearly connected to sit in judgment on this affair, but this I am confident of, that my Brother did not sell goods to receive the pay twelve months after in tobacco or money at the option of the purchaser, when money was depreciating every hour. The letters which my Brother wrote me at the time, speak a very different language, and common sense can never suppose a man capable of any business to be guilty of such unpardonable folly ; in a word, the question is plainly this : shall you now pay to him the quantity of tobacco due to him more than a year since, or the money which tobacco then sold for, in the present depreciated state of the currency, that is, one-fifth of the value of what was then mutually acknowledged to be his due ? I wish, with you, to avoid submitting this to indifferent persons, and had rather suffer much than to have such a question publickly agitated between gentlemen I have had a connection with and an esteem for. The advantage of paying in money is, I suppose, to the benefit of the Company. They will judge for themselves ; but for me, I never have, nor will be, benefited by the depreciation. I have suffered essentially by it, but whatever injustice I have, or may, meet with, shall never induce me to be unjust. You have my sentiments freely, and, not accustomed to

disguise my feelings, I must tell you it gives me pain to find, by the delays made in the stating these accounts, that the Partners are trifled with, and must suffer materially. If I receive no state of them before my leaving America, I shall consider the affair, under the depreciation and other circumstances, as being desperate. As to a ballance of money on hand, it is very extraordinary that any money of the Company should be kept on hand and suffered to run down to nothing, or next, in value; it is still more so, and absolutely inexcusable, after what passed between Col. Banister, myself and Col. Adams at his house. From that time, at least, the Company are not to suffer by a depreciation, as tobacco could then have been purchased at little more than one-half its present price, and Col. Adams was advised to realize in that or other articles, which on a settlement should be sold, and the proceeds divided. As it will be eight or ten days before I sail, hope for your answer to this, and that it may inclose a state of the accounts of the Company.

I am, with Esteem, Gentlemen, your most Obedt. & very Hble Servt.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. Col. Richard Adams & Turner Southall, Esqrs.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC MOSES.

Williamsburg, May 6th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you by the last post, to which have little to add. [Cipher translated.] By a person arrived in town last night, we are told that the enemy had carried the out lines of Charlestown after a sharp and bloody conflict. This account, though but too probably true, does not come well authenticated. Letters of the 22d of last month mention that the enemy had then nearly completed their blockade of the town, and that all communication would, in a short time, be cut off. After the capture of Charlestown, we may expect them in this bay every hour, and sorry I am to tell you, our

situation grows worse every day. As to any effectual resistance, if the enemies of England do not come to our assistance at Charlestown, the place is inevitably lost. Nothing of resistance will be made in the lower parts of Virginia—or the same as none. I expect Mr. de Francy every day from up the country, and hope to hasten him away immediately; for if we delay ten or fifteen days longer, I fear we shall not get away at all. From this day my anxiety on this account is inexpressible. My best wishes attend you. Adieu.

S. DEANE.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Williamsburg, May 6th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I have written you a very long letter by last post, to which refer you. Our last news from Charlestown is, that the out lines had been carried by the enemy, after a bloody conflict. This was brought to town last evening. Though but too probable, the way it comes leaves room for doubt. Authentic intelligence, as late as about the 22d of last month, says the town was then nearly invested on every side, and that all communication would in a few days be cut off. I hourly expect Mr. De Francy from up the country, where he has been these ten days past, closing his accounts. On his return I hope to embark. Our old friend President Laurens is on his way to embark from this bay, and with us, I suppose, if he can get a passage. Under our present circumstances this is not the most disagreeable of my prospects. The apprehensions of being blocked up give me too much anxiety to think of any lesser evil. I have no time to add, save that I am, with the most sincere Friendship & Esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Robert Morris.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO WILLIAM LIVINGSTON.

Williamsburg, May 6th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Norton of this city has received letters from his Brother in London, by which he expects him and his family in New York early in this month, on their way to Virginia, and, being acquainted in your State, has asked me to recommend them to the friendly notice and assistance of my friends there, among whom I have the honor of counting your Excellency, and to assure you that whatever assistance you afford them will be gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Norton and lay a fresh obligation on me.

I am, with the most sincere Respect & Attachment,  
Your Excellency's most obedt. & very hble. Servt.,  
S. DEANE.

Governor Livingston.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO PHILEMON DICKINSON.

Williamsburg, May 6th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Norton of this city expects that his Brother and family will arrive in New York some time this month, on their way to Virginia, and, being unacquainted in your State, has desired me to recommend them to the civilities of my friends in New Jersey, among whom I have the pleasure of esteeming yourself, and of assuring you that whatever civilities or assistance may lye in your power to afford them will be gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Norton. I expect to sail in a week or ten days. My Compliments to Mrs. Dickinson.

I am, with the most sincere Esteem, Dear Sir,  
Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Gen. P. Dickinson.

TO JOHN BANISTER.

Williamsburg, May 9th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you on the 8th ulto., since which have not received any of your favors. I am sorry to find Messrs. Southall & Adams disposed to put off a settlement of the Company's accounts, and, as I think, to trifle with us in a manner I did not expect. They now set up a dispute with my Brother, the grounds of which are, they purchased of him early last spring a quantity of goods to be paid for in a certain time in tobacco at Ten Pounds the hundred. My Brother having then other prospects in view, wrote them, proposing to release the tobacco and receive the money in lieu. This they refused to consent to. Soon after he had the misfortune of having his books and papers, and among them their letters, fall into the hands of the enemy. They now insist on a right of paying him in money; as he depended on the tobacco, and as the nominal sum is not now in value more than one sixth part of what they mutually contracted for, I am really surprized that any men pretending to the character of honest merchants can make so unjust a proposal; nor can I believe they make it with any other view than to find an excuse for putting off a settlement whilst they speculate on our funds. Inclosed is a copy of my letter to them on the subject, which I wish you to shew to Col. Harvey, now at Richmond, and, if possible, that you and he will bring about a settlement without delay. The Fier Roderique must sail in a few days, and I am extreemly impatient to be gone, or I would meet you at Richmond. I hope these gentlemen will close the accounts justly, for it must give me pain to leave the country with so unfavorable an opinion of persons I have been connected with, as I otherways certainly must. Present my compliments to Mrs. Bannister, and accept my best wishes for your prosperity.

I am, Dear Sir, with sincere Esteem, &amp;c.,

S. DEANE.

Col. Banister.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO SAMUEL CHASE.

Williamsburg, May 9th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 2d is before me ; I hope to sail soon. No news from Charlestown, which gives me some hopes. The Assembly of Virginia made a House last Tuesday, Col. Harrison, Speaker, have not as yet heard of any thing done. The internal police, as well as finance of this State, are most wretchedly deranged at present ; the sale of the back lands has brought into their treasury between one and two millions of pounds, and Colonel Clark's Quixotte expedition to the Illinois has cost them nearly four millions, and he is now ordered to abandon the country and to retire on this side of the Ohio.

The removal of the seat of government has displeased everyone in the lower parts of the State, and too many are, in consequence of that impolitic measure, and of the immense taxes coming on them, become indifferent as to what may happen, and there are (not a few) who openly go still farther ; in short, our prospects darken in my view. Congress has become absolutely contemptible. The credit and honor of the nation totally violated and lost ; and that of private sales is now to be tampered with. I can but express my approbation of the firmness of your Senate in refusing to pass the Confiscation Bill ; the cool and sensible part of this State already repent their passing such a law here. Some of the bad consequences are already begun to be felt, more will inevitably follow soon. The more of any article is put on sale, the lower the price, and it is the height of madness and folly to depreciate the value of landed estates at a time when heavy taxes are to be laid on them. The sales of forfeited estates and of the back lands will in a few months sink the price of real estates near one-half ; in the old settled parts of Virginia they already feel it sensibly. I wish the new money may not meet the state of what preceeded. I hate to augur evil only,

and that continually, but I really fear that individual States will find it impossible to regain a credit which the whole have unitedly lost, or, rather, thrown away. I expect De Francey every day, and after his return a very few days will set us afloat. My best wishes attend you, and am with great sincerity your Constant Friend and very Hble. Servt.,

S. DEANE.

S. Chase, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN BAPTISTE LAZAURUS THEVENEAU DE FRANCY.

Williamsburg. May 10th, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—I this moment received yours of the 8th. As this will probably meet you on the way down I have only to say that the Letter of Messrs. Adams & Southall to me, in answer to ours by Monsr. Audaine, is a convincing proof of the determination of those gentlemen to trifle with us. Did I think it possible to settle with them, I would not spare any time or trouble to do it; but I am convinced they have no such intention, and the dispute with my Brother is a meer pretence to drive off the settlement; otherways, why did not they mention it when we were all at Richmond together? I wish to get out of any connection or concern whatever with those men, and this experiment will make me more cautious in future how I form connections. I have written them a sharp letter on the subject, which I will shew you, and explain the whole. You say you will be in town on Thursday, that is, tomorrow, at farthest. I am rejoiced to hear your ships are in such forwardness. God send that we may be soon free from these men, and escape even worse. I gave the arbitration of the cannon to Mr. Rose, who sent it to the Governor, and a duplicate is kept by him for you to sign. I cannot send you particulars, but the amount agreed on is 3,600. 2. 15., tobacco equal to 360 hogsheads, and 65 lbs. of tobacco. We called in Mr.

Norton as a third Person, though we did not greatly disagree at first, and at last were unanimous. I have reviewed and reconsidered the subject, and think, on the whole, that both parties ought to be contented. The cannon are cheap enough at 360 hogsheads of tobacco, and the tobacco is better for you than the cannon. We calculated the stores, viz., balls, rammers, &c., agreeable to the invoice you gave us, and have made an exact estimate of every article, which I will shew you, and have inserted the same in our awards. Mr. Rose is well satisfied with our estimate. Believe me, my friend, I feel for you most sensibly under your vexatious situation. Keep up your spirits, and let us hasten to more agreeable scenes to recruit our almost exhausted spirits, as well as our worn out patience.

I am, with sincere Respect and Friendship, My Dear  
Sir, Yours, S. DEANE.

P. S. I have no tobacco to ship, or would embrace the opportunity offered.

Mr. De Francy.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOSEPH WHARTON.

Williamsburg, May 10th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I this day received yours of the 2d, and note the contents. On my arrival in France, I will, if your brother is still there, inform him as you have directed; also represent your situation to Mr. Tardy. As to lands which you propose to sell, it will be necessary for you to send me an explicit power to contract in your behalf; I can then agree for the sales, in a manner binding on both parties. The way I propose is this: the agreement to be made that on your signing the deed, and delivering the same to the French Minister or Consul, you shall be entitled to draw for the purchase money, which the purchaser shall be obliged

to pay at sixty days sight to your order ; as soon, then, as I make a sale, you shall be informed of it, and by the first opportunity send to me an attested copy of the deed, lodged as above directed, and your bills for the money to be applied or payable as you shall direct. This I conceive to be the most simple, as well as safe method. Let me advise you to procure a good draught or chart of the lands, and a brief description of their advantages in point of situation, water courses, timber, &c. Tho' it may be difficult to get this done at present with the exactness wished for, yet it is of importance that you send the best you can procure ; it will materially help the same. As to the lands in Pennsylvania in which you are about to speculate, I will be one quarter concerned, and I will leave directions with my brother Simeon Deane here to correspond with you and to furnish my quota of the money. You must manage this affair in Philadelphia, and as fast as you obtain grants, send to me copies of the same, and the best charts and description you can obtain, in the manner already mentioned, with power to sell in France, or elsewhere in Europe, one third, or one half, or more, as you shall judge best ; but I think it adviseable to sell at least to amount of the purchase money paid at first, as in this way a certain profit is realized, and increasing in value. It will be a very easy task to clear up the money transaction between your brother Samuel Wharton and me. But I am not fond of publications at present ; my first and main object is to settle my accounts with the Congress, and by mathematical demonstration shew the world that they are much in my debt in money matters as they are on other accounts ; this done, their ingratitude and injustice to me will appear in a just light, and cover those who, by their cabals, have been the authors of the abuse I have met with, with indelible infamy. This I am sure of doing in a few weeks after my arrival in France ; but as I am exposed to many accidents in my voyage, I have written, and shall send a letter to Congress before I sail, fully

refuting Mr. A. Lee's,\* and freely expostulating with them; this letter I will order to be shown to you and others my friends, and if any fatal accident happen to me, to be published. Nothing but the critical situation of public affairs has prevented my publishing for more than twelve months past, and still prevents. In short our enemies rely, with but too much ground, on our party quarrells and divisions, and every proof of them gives fresh spirit to their operations against us; but no consideration shall induce me to suffer my character to be finally blasted by a set of men whom I have not only served, but saved from absolute destruction. As to speculating in the back lands of this State I have no disposition. I consider the title on many accounts doubtful, not solely from the claims of other States or individual companies, but from the inhabitants actually settled, and settling there, who are a sett of the most lawless barbarians, and who will ultimately divide the land as they please, and among themselves, without regard to grants, deeds, or patents from Virginia or any other body. The best speculation at present in Virginia is in lands in the old and cultivated parts, where they are daily falling in value; but the best time to engage in them is not yet arrived, and at any time it will not be so good as to the northward, except for monied men, who mean to improve them immediately. I shall probably sail in eight or ten days, and will write you immediately after my arrival; however, send on your letters by every opportunity to the care of Doctor Franklin, or by the way of Virginia, under cover to my Brother at this place.

Wishing you prosperity, I am, with sincere esteem,  
Dear Sir, your most obdt. & very Hble. Servt.,

SILAS DEANE.

Mr. Joseph Wharton.

*Thomas Mss.*

\* Lee's letter to Congress appeared in the Penn. Packet of March 4, 7, and 9, 1780. An article by Joseph Wharton, in reply, was printed in the same paper, March 10, 1780.

TO ISAAC MOSES.

Williamsburg, May 11th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received your favor of the 2d, and observe the contents. Nothing from Charlestown nor any other quarter. I most sincerely lament the death of my friend Don Juan, and greatly fear it may prejudice an affair I have in Spain. I am now waiting only for the return of De Francy from Richmond, the Fier Roderique being entirely ready ; but I pray you continue to write me, under cover to my Brother, and give the earliest intelligence what may be the fate of the schooner. I hope soon to be once more afloat, and am, with best wishes for your prosperity, Dear Sir,

Yours &amp;c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JAMES WILSON.

Williamsburg, May 13th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 20th ulto. this day. Gratz, who set out with my letter last January, is, I am told, still in Virginia. This has prevented our corresponding during my detention here, as in your letter is inclosed our cypher. I would have sought some other safe conveyance, but he has been promising every day this three months to set out *to-morrow*. I have not time to notice your many important subjects in yours ; indeed, there is no need of my attempting it, as I understand them well, and shall most carefully attend to them. Am sorry to hear of the death of our good friend Don Juan, but hope it will not hurt our affairs abroad, where, if I arrive safe, I hope to put my former as well as present affairs on a respectable footing, and to make (what necessity alone will force me to do) Congress to blush for their con-

duct towards me. You must have observed that the letter published as Arthur Lee's was fabricated in America, & probably in Philadelphia, it is dated 10th Feb., 1779, and quotes parts of a publication of Master Rowland's in Dunlap's paper of the 31st of August following. Is it not surprizing that Congress did not, when this letter was read to them, discover the forgery and the vile purposes it was intended for? Or were they so pleased at hearing me abused that they passed by this imposition on them? Wharton is an honest and spirited man, and he writes in that stile. I wrote him last post, and inclosed a letter from Mons. Monthieu; ask him to shew it you. Monthieu was one of the principal contractors for our supplies after the long wrangling and abuse of Mr. Lee against him and others, and his charges of their being concerned with me to impose on the public in their accounts. Mr. Monthieu, Mr. Chaumont, Mr. Williams, and others have had their accounts credited and scrutinized; the result was they were approved of, and a ballance found in their favor, Mr. Johnson the Congress Auditor being one of the referees. This is doing great part of my business to my hands; for my having been obliged to leave these accounts unsettled, the charges of money advanced remained, of course, general charges without vouchers, and gave my enemies the only advantage they had against me, which I could not reply to with full demonstration. The accounts of this kind at last examined, and found not only just, but a ballance in favor of the individuals, prove to a mathematical certainty what sum remains on me, and how far I have been or have had the means to be a peculator. The sum left on me (all the sums collected) will not amount to more than 4,000 £ sterling, nor, as I am fully convinced, much exceed 3,000 £, for many small accounts of expenditures for public service remain to be deducted; here, then, is the enormous sum out of which, after deducting two years expences, I was suspected of making such embezzlements and

speculations as to occasion ye alarm to be sounded thro' ye Continent, and on which Congress not only refused me the rewards I had well merited in their service, but treated me with Indignity and neglect. I will not trust myself farther on the subject. I love my country, but I feel (perhaps at times) too sensibly. In short, nothing but a consciousness of the rectitude of my conduct and a reflection on the material and essential services I rendered my country, joined to a most sincere contempt for the miserable and corrupt wretches who have abused me, could support me. But, my friend, when I bring the men who have lately composed the great deliberative body of these States, and the principal and important executive departments to pass in review, I tremble for the fate of my country, and my spirits sink.

I have written a very long letter to Congress, in which I have expostulated and remonstrated with a freedom which may possibly give offence ; if so, I shall be sorry, not for the cause, but for the effect in that letter. I have stated my accounts, and proved what I before asserted. I shall send it to you open, and a letter with it, which will be my last, I hope, to you, on this side the water. The partnership of Adams, Deane & Co. is dissolved. After the misfortune of my Brother last spring, he gave up the whole management to Adams and Southall, with whose conduct the partners here are by no means satisfied ; and as our other plans failed, this became of still less consequence. Messrs. Adams and Southall have taken on them to accompt to the concerned ; I wish they may do it to satisfaction. The temptations offered by the depreciation have been too strong for most of our countrymen. My brother will probably wait on you in Philadelphia this summer, and to him I refer you for particulars. The Fier Roderique is now waiting only for the ships up the river to go under her convoy, and Mr. De Francey is there, hastening them down. I expect him every day. As I have promised you another letter I will not bid



you farewell, but remain, with sincere Friendship, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. James Wilson.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOSEPH WHARTON.

Williamsburg, May 25th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you a long letter the 10th, and am this instant favored with yours of the 2d. As I was so particular in my last, refer you to that. It seems as if Arthur Lee and Ralph Izard, finding themselves incapable of doing more mischief in Europe, are shifting the scene. It is nearly indifferent to me where they are, but I fear that joining the faction here they may do us much hurt as to the common cause; individually I disregard them. I most sincerely rejoice at the prospects you mention in your letter, and wish that a detachment of the French fleet may be sent in season to relieve Charlestown. Our ships to compose our squadron are now all assembled at York. I leave this on Tuesday to prepare a few necessaries, and hope to sail in a few days after. We shall make about sixteen or eighteen sail, mostly armed. Doctor Bancroft's conduct in not writing is really astonishing and is unpardonable. We have nothing here of news, but hourly expect important intelligence from Charlestown, as by the last intelligence they had held out longer than was expected. I hope they will come off victorious, which will be a blow equal to any thing that has happened during the War. I pray you to continue to write to me, especially on the subject of lands, under cover to my Brother here, or to France directly, where I hope to be in a few weeks, and am, with esteem,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Joseph Wharton.

*Thomas Mss.*

## TO COLONEL DORSEY.

Williamsburg, May 26th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you the 13th, and have not the pleasure of hearing from you since. Your son, whom I met a few days since at Hampton, told me the Chance was arrived ; but from other accounts I fear he had been misinformed. Pray give me the earliest intelligence under cover to my Brother. Your letters may possibly arrive after my sailing, but he will be charged with my affairs here. The fleet is nearly ready for sailing. It will consist of about fifteen sail of ships, the Fier Roderique included. They are all of them at York. Twenty-five sail left Hampton Roads on Tuesday last for the West Indies. The arrival of a number of vessells has checked the price of West India goods, but the demand for the forces collecting and on their march this way will keep them in demand. This moment news is received of the surrender of Fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island. General De Kalb leaves Petersburg this day with about 2,500 Men. Could he arrive in season, Charlestown might be relieved ; otherways I fear much from it. I shall be happy in any opportunity of serving you during my stay in France, and am, with esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &amp;c.,

S. DEANE.

Colonel Dorsey.

*Thomas Mss.*

## TO ISAAC MOSES.

Williamsburg, May 26th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I shall go for York next Tuesday or Wednesday to embark. Our fleet will consist of about sixteen sail of ships, chiefly armed, with the Fier Roderique. I may possibly write you from thence before sailing. If not, I will only say as to the Chance, if she arrive, it is my opinion it will be as well to make sale of her ; but if you choose to risque her again, I am

content to share as before. Out of the sales of the cargo pay your disbursements; and, if you sell the whole, interest me as much as the ballance in such other adventures as you are concerned in, and acquaint my brother Simeon Deane therewith. I hope to be in France in six weeks from this time, and tho' my detention has been unfortunate for the plans proposed, yet shall be in season to take advantage of the next fall and winter, and to form my judgment as to the continuance of the war. This day news arrived of the surrender of Fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island. General De Kalb marches this day from Petersburg with about 2,500 men to relieve Charlestown. God grant he may arrive in time! West India goods are at a stand, by means of the late arrivals, but the demand for the army will prevent their falling. Tobacco rises; best James River at 65 £ to 70 £; rum, 35 £; salt, 25 £. Sugars in no demand; sell at about 180 £. These are about the general prices. The people have so reduced their consumption that small importations, in comparison of former ones, have greater effects on prices. The people [cipher translated] at large hold Congress and their money in contempt, but the better part suspend their judgment. The Virginia Assembly has done nothing about their money as yet. Continue to write me, and be assured I am, &c.,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

P. S.—La Fargue tells me you had a hat of his for sale among my things. Mention the price it sold at in your next, that I may pay him.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JAMES WILSON.

Williamsburg, May 28th, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—This will probably be my last letter from this side the water, and with it I send you my

letter to Congress, open for your perusal, but so sealed that by slipping a wafer under the seal it will not appear to have been sealed by any other person than the writer. You on the spot know perfectly well the temper and disposition of Congress, and can judge of the propriety of delivering this letter at this time. I have asserted nothing but what Congress knew to be true; but truth is oftentimes held as more criminal than falsehood, and punished with greater severity. You will see the motives for my writing. I may have been too free. You, my friend, are the best judge, and were I so happy as to have your advice in person, I should not hesitate a moment as to this letter; but a five months unfortunate detention in this disagreeable place, having my private arrangements broken, and our public prospects growing worse, may have led me to say something improper, or to express myself in a manner I ought to have avoided. To you, therefore, I submit either to deliver the letter immediately on the receipt of it, or to suspend it until you hear what may be the fortune of the Fier Roderique in her passage. I would by no means have the letter finally suppressed, and, should I be made a prisoner, desire it may be instantly delivered to Congress. I have no apprehensions of Congress being irritated against me personally on this account, nor that they can treat me worse than they have already done; yet as there may be circumstances known to you, of which I am ignorant, which may render the immediate delivery of this letter improper, I submit it to your judgment, and wish you to shew it to our mutual friends in Philadelphia, and in particular to Mr. Morris, but in a way that it may not be known that such a letter is in Philadelphia previous to Congress receiving it. I wrote you a long letter, I think on the 13th, for tho' I kept a copy, the date happened to be omitted; and to this hour being uncertain whether Gratz is arrived at Philadelphia, I can make no use of our cypher, but be assured I shall carefully attend to the

contents of yours of the 20th ulto., and pray you to write often and explicitly on the situation of public as well as of our private affairs. I shall go to York this week to embark, and hope to sail soon after. I most sincerely wish you all possible felicity, and am, with high Esteem and Friendship, My Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

James Wilson, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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GENERAL STATE OF MY DEMANDS ON THE UNITED STATES.

I AGREED with the Secret Committee to embark for France on the 20th of January, 1776; my expences were to be borne and a Commission allowed me for the purchases I made on account of the public. At the same time Messrs. Alsop, Morris, Lewis, Livingston and myself contracted to supply these States with Forty Thousand Pounds Sterling of goods, the Commercial Committee contracting to furnish the funds in Europe at my disposal, to run all risques, and, exclusive of charges and duties, to allow the person going to Europe a clear commission of 5 per cent. on said 40,000£ Sterling. See the Contract signed the 19th of Feb'y, 1776.

I undertook the voyage in both capacities, and had my Commission made out accordingly, bearing date March 2d, 1776; also received instructions of the same date to purchase 25,000 stand of arms, cloathing, &c. (see instructions signed by the Secret Committee). The Committee failed in supplying funds to the amount promised, and consequently the goods ordered were not purchased, but my whole attention turned to fulfill the orders of the Secret Committee for cannon, arms, &c., &c., &c., in which business, with that intrusted to me, I spent the whole of my time, from my arrival in France until the receiving my Commis-

sion from Congress to be jointly with Doctor Franklin and Mr. Lee their Commissioners at the Court of France. This Commission I received in Nov., 1776. The purchases I had made previous were of the last consequence to these States, and agreeable to the tenor of my instructions, as I engaged in no private commercial concern, as I had gone out on the express contract of having a clear commission of five per cent. on my purchases, I think that in all the purchases made by me previous to the arrival of my colleagues I am entitled to that commission. The purchases made and sent out were nearly as follows, *viz* :

Of Monsr. Chaumont, Salt Petre, & of Messrs. Delaps, Sulphur, to work the same to amount of, as pr. acct. ....	}	62,271 18 6
Of Monsr. Chaumont 2,000 Barrills of Powder, for which I gave my private notes of hand to the amount of. ....	}	186,399 15
Of Monsr. De Beaumarchais 30,000 stand of Arms, Brass Cannon, &c., &c., &c., to amount of nearly....	}	6,000,000
<hr/>		
		Livres 6,248,671 13 6
To Commissions on 6,248,671 13. 6. at 5 pr. Ct. is. ....		£312,433 10 0
To disbursements of various kinds, viz., for intelligence, for relief of Prisoners, escaping from England, which, independant of private ex- pences, must amount at least to..	}	10,000 0 0
To Commissions on purchase of the Magazine at Nantes. ....		220,000
d <sup>o</sup> on Goods bo <sup>t</sup> of him. ....		69,455 26

d <sup>o</sup> on Salt Petre bo <sup>t</sup> of Beau- geard . . . . .	119,061	
d <sup>o</sup> on Goods bo <sup>t</sup> of M <sup>r</sup> Chau- mont after the above . . . . .	86,000	
d <sup>o</sup> on Goods of Sabatier fils and Desprez, &c . . .	548,438 8 6	
	<hr/>	
	1,042,954 11 0	
On the above, say at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., as I had then my expences borne, but gave myself wholly to the busi- ness, and the contracts were in consequence well made . . . . .		[ 26,073 15
To my time from Nov., 1776, to August, 1779, the time of my dis- charge being 2 years and 9 Months, at 12,000 Livres per. annum, the sum allowed by Congress to the Commissioners besides all ex- pences . . . . .		33,000
To my expences from the 6 <sup>th</sup> of August until my return to France, supposed to amount . . . . .		12,000
		<hr/>
		Livres 393,507 5 0

When it is considered that I have already spent more than four years, and that it will probably be five, before these accounts are fully closed, in the service of Congress, to the almost utter ruin of my private fortune, and that the contract I went out on, promised me a clear commission of 5 per cent., the above sum will not be thought unreasonable. Had I paid no more attention to the business of my country than my office of Commissioner simply required of me, and given

almost ever so little to my private affairs, I could with ease have made a much larger sum, and avoided the cruel and base calumnies, with which I have been loaded by those whom I not only served faithfully, but saved from absolute ruin. The contract for arms at Nantes, and for salt petre alone, cleared to Congress more than the above sum; though badly managed after my leaving France and the dismissal of Mr. Williams. During my conducting these affairs, I purchased and fitted out the Deane Frigate, now in Congress service, and other ships to the number of fifteen sail, the greater part of them large ships, but one of which miscarried. Without remittances from Congress I often was in the greatest distress, and often gave my own notes for goods purchased, even when I had but little prospect of raising the money; and but for the most urgent and continual applications to certain great personages, I must have sunk, loaded with debt, and loss of credit forever. The amount of all the purchases made by me of stores and goods, and ships contracted for, amount to more than Ten Million of Livres, nearly the whole of which arrived safe in America, and that owing principally to the directions and orders given by me in writing to the commanders of the ships. The only ship which fell into the hands of the enemy was that which, contrary to my orders, went to Martinico. When to all this is added the hazards I have been and must again be exposed to of falling into the hands of an enemy enraged against me personally, on account of the services I have rendered these States.

I am confident no unprejudiced person will consider the above sum exorbitant. I have made the above state to be laid before Congress, that in case of accident to me, my son may not be left a beggar, as well as orphan, by my devoting myself to the service of my country.

SILAS DEANE.

Williamsburg, May 29th, 1780.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO BARNABAS DEANE.

York, June 2d, 1780.

[See postscript to letter dated April 20th, 1780.]

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TO PHILIP SCHUYLER.

York, June 2d, 1780.

DEAR GENERAL,—I am now waiting at this place for a wind, after waiting long for the ships to be got ready, as I was so unfortunate at Philadelphia to have but little time with you. I wish, by correspondence, to keep up our acquaintance with each other, and in some measure to supply what absence deprives us of. If you have leisure to write me, our mutual friend, Mr. Morris, will forward your letters.

I have written a long letter to Congress, and have for some time hesitated as to its being delivered under the present circumstances of public affairs. I have written with a freedom which may, perhaps, be ill received; but I have kept close to well known facts, and whatever liberties I have taken with my avowed or concealed enemies, the letter signed A. Lee, written, indeed, by his friends in America, but permitted to be read in Congress and published, will justify me. I need not attempt to describe my feelings to you, and I am persuaded, when you reflect on my being forced to make a dangerous voyage to Europe, on my own expense, to justify my conduct, that you will think it right in me to do all in my power to set it in as just a point of light as in my power to do at this time, least accident prevent my doing it at all.

I returned the grant of Congress for ten thousand dollars (in full for my time and expenses in returning to America and waiting 14 months on them) in as decent a manner as I could, and it was accepted by them; but my return has already cost me more than

Fifty Thousand Dollars, which I have paid out of my small private fortune, and which I am still every day lessening. Though I have held neither fortune nor any thing else in any competition with the service of my country, yet such returns are really very mortifying, and to me distressing. I am going abroad to do the business of the public more than my own, yet Congress have refused me any support. I have clearly shewn that a ballance will be in my favor, yet they have refused to make provision for the payment of it, even on condition of their auditors finding it, as I have asserted. Under these circumstances, I rely on your friendly candor to make allowance for any thing I may have said in my letter to Congress too free. I hope the faction which prevailed last summer in Congress is effectually broken. No man has a higher respect for the representative body of this country than I have; at the same time, no one can have a worse opinion of those who, by their factious intrigues, brought that body into contempt in general, and endangered the very existence of these States as free and independent ones. In these greater mischiefs my lesser misfortunes are, in some degree, lost, and I now flatter myself that things will be managed in a different manner, and that our country will see better times. In a theatre where so many blunders have been committed and mischief done, if the evil is not incurable, you have a wide and ample field to exert your superior abilities in doing much and great good to our country, whose interests I shall ever bear nearest my heart, and seek every means to promote. I pray you give my most respectful compliments to your colleague, Mr. Livingston, and accept my best wishes for your prosperity.

I am, with the highest Respect, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

General Schuyler.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOSEPH WEBB.

York, June 2d, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—Though the unkind reception which my letter of November last met with, and your silence since, have given me much pain, yet I can with great sincerity assure you that my friendship for you, and wishes for your prosperity and that of your family, have never abated. If there was no occasion for my writing in the manner I did, I am much rejoiced; but surely the freedom of a friend, and one who from a long and most tender connection interests himself deeply in whatever affects you, even if his friendly freedoms should not only be unnecessary, but unreasonable, ought not to give offence where the intention is evidently good: thus stands the case between us. I am now embarking on a voyage, the issue of which is at least very uncertain; and shall I, thus situated, use less freedom than at other times? Or shall I appear by silence to have forgotten you, by way of retaliation for your neglect of me? I can do neither. I can play the hypocrite but badly at any time, and I have neither inclination nor interest to do it at this time; I must therefore plainly tell you that your rejecting my proposals, refusing the power I sent you, and dissatisfaction at my refusal to put everything in the world which was mine when I left Wethersfield unconditionally into your hands, gives me ground to apprehend that you have lent your confidence to men who, wishing neither of us well, are aiming to draw you into a dispute with me, and thereby to strengthen the hands of those who mean me ill. If so, permit me to caution you against going too far with them, or in their direction. I am confident that the proposals I have made you will justify me, and be esteemed generous ones by every disinterested and informed person in the world. They were once acknowledged by you to be such; they are thought different of at present. When I made them, I had fair and promising

prospects before me, and I never had any in which I did not wish you to partake. The scene is greatly changed since we met at Philadelphia in 1778. A near prospect of the peace and independence of our country, which then was before us, and my almost certain one of future private ease and independence, have vanished together. No part of America was at any time in greater distress or danger than all the southern parts are at this moment; and, for myself, I am now under the necessity of going into a voluntary exile, without funds to support me, and wounded with the ingratitude of those whom I have not only served faithfully, but saved from destruction. Reflect a few moments, I pray you, on the past and present. I do not aim at moving your compassion, or at exciting your generosity, but surely you cannot still think that the pittance of estate which I have in Wethersfield, not amounting in the whole to fifteen hundred pounds sterling money, is exorbitant for a man who spent more than ten years of the prime of his life, principally in taking care of your interests and of the education of your brethren. In the course of my management, had I attended strictly to keep only within the letter of the law, I must have made a very handsome fortune; what the consequences would have been, everyone acquainted with the circumstances of the estate at the time know little or nothing could have been left, if in reality the creditors would have been paid. I do not repent of the line of conduct I took up. On the contrary, I reflect on it with pleasure; and the many opportunities afforded me in which I sacrificed my personal emolument to the interest of an orphan family, afford me in reflection infinitely greater satisfaction than any which can result from the possession of wealth. But if our sentiments on this subject are as distant from each other as our persons are like to be for some time to come, at least let us part friends; or, rather, let us unite in trying to remove this only possible ground for the interruption of that good har-

mony which has subsisted between us from your infancy. To do this effectually, let judicious and disinterested men settle every thing betwixt us. I have often proposed and wished for it since I have been obliged to leave the country. I should, indeed, prefer a settlement between ourselves ; that at present is impossible ; and I wish that the men undertaking this may not come to it as to dispute between parties, but to assist to settle an account between two friends, one of whom cannot possibly attend to it himself. You have an inventory which will shew you the amount of sums received and paid out ; you were privy to the keeping this account ; you have the account made out from the inventory the winter before my leaving Wethersfield, ready for a settlement, and you have in your hands notes payable to me or my order, and ballances on book much more than sufficient to pay the ballances remaining. The landed estate left by your honored father has long since been divided, and in your possession ; you know it never yielded me any profit at any time ; the landed securities are in the same predicament, and you know well how much anxiety and vexation, as well as money, the obtaining and defending them cost me, and that the income never ballanced a fifth part of my expences on them ; these facts being within your knowledge. I write freely to you, and your brethren ought not to be ignorant of them, for it will affect me sensibly to be thought, and perhaps represented, by them as a defaulter, when I have done not simply legal Justice towards them, but have treated them with parental kindness.

At times I think my fate is peculiar, and a little hard, but a consciousness of the rectitude of my intentions and conduct prevents my repining, and has, as I trust it will, afford me some cheerful moments in the darkest scenes. I have many subjects to think of, and some of them disagreeable ones, as well as peculiarly interesting to me, but be assured no distance of place, or change of circumstances, will ever abate my affec-

tion for your family ; nor shall I ever, whatever I may meet with, let pass unimproved any opportunity of serving them which may come within my power. I have set down to write to Col. S. B. Webb, but a gentleman from Long Island, telling me he was returned there, I dare write nothing of what I wish to say to him, except my best wishes for his speedy ransom and prosperity. Pray, in your first letter, mention me to him, and assure Col. Webb, your sisters, and Mrs. Webb of my sincere affection and remembrance. I hope in a year or two we may meet in peace and at ease, but if not, He who directs knows best. I go perfectly resigned to my fate, whatever it may be in my voyage, and therefore am not so unhappy as I should otherwise be. God grant you may be perfectly happy and all around you. I have many letters to write, and must therefore bid you once more adieu, and am your sincere and Affectionate Friend,

S. DEANE.

Address to me under cover to Messrs. Samuel & J. H. Delaps, Merchants, Bordeaux ; or to Messrs. Fitz-eau, Grand & Co., Bankers, at Amsterdam ; or to Mr. Grand, Banker, at Paris ; but be cautious what you write, unless a certain conveyance presents, and then order your letters destroyed in case of a capture.

Mr. Joseph Webb.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ROBERT MORRIS.

York, June 4th, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—I now expect to sail the first fair wind. I hoped to have received a letter from you in answer to a long one I wrote to you on the subject of lands (the copy being put up with my papers, I cannot refer to the date), but suppose you might fear your letter would not reach me ; whatever resolution you come to, I wish to know it as early as possible, as the

first person engaging in that business will have the best chance of success. The encouragements given of a French fleet raise our spirits greatly; its arrival must be very seasonable at this time. Depend on hearing from me from the first post I arrive at in France, and as opportunitys offer and leisure permit, oblige me with your letters. I have requested Mr. Thompson to send me the Journals of Congress complete, and I pray you to forward them. Present my compliments to Mrs. Morris, and once more accept my best wishes for your prosperity.

I am most sincerely, Dear Sir, Yours etc.,

S. DEANE.

Robert Morris, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

York, June 4th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I am now waiting only for a wind, to try if my fortune will prove more favorable at sea than on shore. I expect to receive letters from Mr. Morris, by every vessell coming, and pray you to improve the opportunity to favor me with a few lines, and send me the Journals of Congress compleat from the first. I shall be happy if you can put in my power to render you any services in France. Present my compliments to Mrs. Thomson, and accept my best wishes for your prosperity, and be assured that no man is with more respect than, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

The latest papers will also be agreeable, but let them come in a way that may not cost me postage, which may be saved by inclosing them to Doctor Franklin.

Charles Thomson, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ISAAC MOSES.

York, June 4th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I am now waiting only for a wind, and, having many letters to write, must be brief. I wrote you the 11th, 13th, and 26th ulto., the contents of which you will note, and write me under cover to Mr. Simeon Deane here, or directly, as opportunity presents, to me in France. We shall compose a fleet of sixteen sail, mostly large, and design for Rochfort or Bordeaux, uncertain which as yet. I flatter myself that the apprehensions of a French fleet coming on the coast, will prevent the enemy cruising for us, for we are really too deficient in men to maintain the ships as they ought to be, according to their strength in guns. I wish I could hear of the arrival of the *Chance* schooner; she must be arrived or taken before this. Pray inform my brother, as early as you are able to do it, as to her fate. I have only to add my best wishes, and assure you I am, with great sincerity, from, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JAMES WILSON.

York, June 4th, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—I wrote desiring you to shew the letter of mine to Congress to Mr. Morris; suppose you let Mr. Thomson have a private perusal of it. I rely much on his judgment, and he knows perfectly well the disposition and temper of Congress at the time. I see by the papers that General Schuyler is at Philadelphia; if you think proper, shew it to him. You were making purchases of lands up the Delaware; on reflection I am of opinion that those lands would answer as well for a speculation in Europe, as any in America. If you continue your purchases and incline to sell a



part for what the whole cost, so as to realize a certain profit, and continue the traffic, I will undertake for you and be a part interested, or not as you choose, and if you determine on any sale of the kind, I wish to know it soon, as I expect to do something in that way, and the earlier I know what extent I am to go to, the better for those interested. I am now only waiting for a wind, and therefore pray you to present my compliments to Mrs. Wilson, and accept my best wishes for your prosperity.

I am with sincere friendship and respect, My Dear Sir, Your most obedt. & very hble. servt.,

S. DEANE.

James Wilson, Esqr.

P. S.—If you do not find strong reasons against it, must desire you to deliver my letter as soon as you can conveniently.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO WILLIAM DUER.

York, June 4th, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have been much disappointed in not receiving a line from you, acknowledging the receipt of my last, which was forwarded you by our mutual friend Mr. Morris, but hope you will not fail of sending on your letters, to meet me in Europe. I hope to sail tomorrow or next day, if the wind favors, and shall exert myself to put, as soon as possible, every affair I am concerned in, on a certain footing, and particularly that on which we have lately written largely. I have no doubt but the affair will be compleated to satisfaction. The death of our friend Don Juan affected me much, as I esteemed him for his honesty and goodness of heart ; but I hope a certain affair will not suffer by it. As Mr. Jay is safely arrived at Madrid, I shall try to go there next winter, and to compleat the contract for masts, in which I flatter myself I shall not meet with much difficulty. I have no heart to enter

on politics or news ; as to myself, it may give you some satisfaction to know that Mr. Williams, Mr. Monthieu, and other accounts to which the principal objections were laid to my general account, and on which the faction founded their principal charges, have been examined and settled, and a ballance found by referees (Mr. Johnson one of them) in their favor ; this has, in a great measure, done my business to my hand. I have written a very long letter to Congress of 37 pages, in which I have stated this, and remonstrated freely on the injustice done me. I may probably give offence, but as Congress had permitted the factitious letter of Arthur Lee to be read, and as it had been published, I thought it incumbent on me to take notice of it ; my letter, if necessary, will be published, as I have left Copies. I call Arthur Lee's a factitious letter, but it is more properly a forgery, as it was wrote in America, and not in Paris, which is evident from the letter itself. I have sent my letter open to our friend Wilson, and he will probably take a copy ; if so, call on him when you are at Philadelphia and he will shew it to you. I have had strong inducements to publish since my being in Virginia, but really, my friend, I do not think either the circumstances of public affairs, or my situation, just leaving the country, will admit of it ; it cannot be long before I shall demonstrate the falsity of every suggestion against me, if I arrive in safety, and we shall make the experiment the first fair wind, which obliges me to omit many things I intended to have said, and can only assure you of my esteem, and that I am, most sincerely, Your Friend, &c.,

S. DEANE.

William Duer, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO JOSHUA JOHNSON.

Passy, June 22, 1780.

SIR,—I duly received the honor of your letter acquainting me with your acceptance of the trust you

were appointed to by Congress, and your readiness to enter upon the execution of it. I have delayed hitherto requesting your coming to Paris for that purpose, because Mr. Deane, who had the chief management of all the mercantile affairs, and whose presence, as well as papers, might be necessary to explain those transactions, has been long daily expected here, having written to me in December last, from Virginia, that he was there on his way to France, was to sail in the *Fendant*, a French man-of-war, for Martinique, and thence take a passage hither. We have heard some time of the arrival of the *Fendant* at that island, but I hear nothing of Mr. Deane. When I reflect on my time of life I grow more impatient to have those accounts settled; if, therefore, Mr. Deane should not arrive in the course of a month I must then desire you would come up. Bring with you, if you can, a good clerk that is an accountant, to copy, etc., and let us do the business together as well as we can.

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*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., Wharton's Ed., III. 809.*

FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, July 3d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I left off writing to you in Virginia sooner than was necessary, under the expectation of your leaving that country much sooner than you did, and am by that means possessed of one or two letters of yours that have not been answered. Such parts of them as have regard to politicks I shall now pass over in silence, which you will excuse, as you know my objections to writing on that subject at any time, but more especially when the letters are exposed to the accidents that occur on the ocean.

Your departure from Virginia, return into the Capes, and departing again, have all been announced here. We suppose you now safe off the coast of America, and most ardently do I wish for your safe

arrival in France, the news of which will give me real pleasure. Come when it may, you will not have the felicity of meeting some gentlemen there you expected to see, as they are on their passage out here, as we are informed; but no matter, you will steadily pursue the objects that induced you to return to Europe, which will enable you to set your transactions for America in that just and fair light in which they ought to stand, and give you that high share of merit with your country that I do most firmly believe to be justly your due.

I beg my best respects may be presented to your fellow passenger, Mons. de Francy. As I suppose him engaged in a thousand agreeable scenes and pursuits, I will not call off his attention by writing to him yet a while; but he may depend on my steady attachment to him, as his good sense and good conduct have made that kind of impression on me that will be lasting. Pray present, also, my most respectfull compliments to our worthy and venerable friend, Doctor Franklin; he has my best wishes for the continuance of his health, spirits, and happyness. I also present my respects, by your means, to Monsr. Chaumont and Monsr. de Beaumarchais, gentlemen whose names ever impress me with gratefull sentiments, on account of their very important services to this country.

You will have heard the fall of Charleston. The loss is, no doubt, a heavy one, and I do not suppose it will be regained any other way than by treaty, but in that way it must and will be got back, for the present possession of it by the enemy will advance them very little in their attempts to conquer this country. The force they must leave there in garrison weakens their main army and renders them less capable of operating where their whole force is necessary. In short, we have got over the shock the loss first occasioned, and now seem to feel no other uneasiness on that score than what is occasioned by contemplating the misfortunes, losses, and sufferings of the unhappy

individuals that have been deprived of property, liberty, or life on the occasion.

General Clinton is returned to New York, and is now amusing himself and army with that kind of predatory warfare which will disgrace the name of Britons to the end of time. They lately landed in the Jerseys, and burnt the village of Springfield and all the farm houses they came near, until General Washington's movements and some hot skirmishes with a brigade or two of his troops and the militia of the country made it necessary for him to retreat. They then went up the North River, and it was expected, would have attacked West Point. This, however, was too hazardous an undertaking, and they returned part of the way, landed on the East side of the North River, burnt Tarry Town, and, it is said, are now laying waste the country between the North River and the Sound, as high up as White Plains. Surely Heaven will never suffer these wicked men to go unpunished. Most anxiously do I wish for the arrival of the French fleet and army, now daily expected to our assistance; and in order to put General Washington on as respectable a footing as our present circumstances will permit, we are setting on foot a spirit for private exertions to favour and support the publick measures. The ladies have made a liberal donation to the American soldiers. A subscription is on foot for raising bounties to be given soldiers enlisting for the war. A Bank is established in this city for the purpose of facilitating supplies of provisions and rum for the army, and I need not tell you the real satisfaction I feel in being essentially useful in forming, promoting, and supporting these measures.

For it is in the line of private exertion that I shall hence forward evince my attachment to my country and its interests, being determined to keep myself clear of all that public employment which exposes an honest man to the envy and jealousy of mankind at the same time that it lays him open to the malicious

attacks of every dirty scoundrel that deals in the murder of reputations. I am hopeful that the exertions of this campaign will end it to the advantage of the allies, and if so I think Great Britain must be compelled to listen to terms of peace founded in justice and reason. And surely no man will say that it is just or reasonable that this country should be again under her domination, after having in times of peaceful submission and chearful obedience to her will attempted to deprive its inhabitants of that liberty which the God of nature, the constitution of their own government, and the laws of the land had given and sanctified to them, and after having plunged daggers in their hearts for not submitting to the full execution of that attempt. In short, I think the people of England will see their own ruin is involved in the prosecution of this wicked war, and as they have already begun to establish committees, they will perhaps proceed to the choice of a congress next, unless their King abandons his project of subjugation.

After declaring against writing politicks I have inadvertently gone into it. I will now return to other matters, and tell you that I have before me your letter of the 15th April, from York, of which I presume you have a copy; the post script thereto is what I particularly have in view at this time. I have read and considered it with attention, and perfectly agree in your opinions. It is my fixed intention to execute the plan in some degree, but to what extent I can not now say; my attention is exceedingly engaged by a great variety of objects, my commerce increases on my hands, and for twelve months or more much success has attended me which naturally multiplies both objects and connections.

My assistance is still necessary to Mr. Holker, whose honesty, virtue, and merit entitle him to every thing I can do for him, and I consider his country entitled to my best exertions in their service, for their liberal aid to this country; much of my time is devoted to pro-

mote their service and aid their pursuits, and I mention these things to shew you cause for any delay that may happen in this land plan, for to manage it as it ought I must have time, attention, and money. Be assured that if I engage in it I shall meddle with no lands but what I have reason to believe valuable, nor transact any thing in such a way as to raise a blush either in your face or mine at a future day.

I shall propose this affair to the consideration of some others also, and when prepared inform you what to expect. You will find enclosed herewith a letter from Mr. Shee, whom I hope you will be able to serve with good effect.

I intended to have written you a very long letter, but can not find time to enlarge by this conveyance as I am too much interrupted to proceed. Mrs. Morris joins me in every good wish towards you, and I Remain, Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend & Obedt. Servt.,

ROBT. MORRIS.

Silas Deane, Esqr., Paris.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN NESBITT.

Nantes, August 4th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Inclosed is a letter from our mutual friend Mr. Shee, sent me after my leaving Philadelphia; as I am but just arrived, can form no judgment of the success I shall meet with in executing his orders, and as our public credit may be better in one part than another in France, pray you would acquaint me how they can be disposed of with you. I shall go for Paris in a day or two from this, where your letters directed to care of Monsr. Chaumont will duly meet me. In the mean time, I am with more sincere Respect,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Nesbitt.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Nantes, August 4th, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—We arrived the 25th ulto., and the 26th I got up to Rochfort. We were fortunate in our passage, except the loss of the *Jane*, for which I am the more affected from our being interested in her. It was absolutely impossible for her to proceed, and the chances ten to one against her returning, had the sailors consented to make the experiment. We took two prizes, a ship and snow bound from St. Christophers to Liverpool, their cargoes worth upwards of twenty thousand pounds sterling. This will defray some of the expences and losses of my friends, the owners of the *Fier Roderique*. The ship mounted eighteen six pounders, and fought at long shot more than one hour, but struck as soon as we brought our whole broadside to bear upon him. The captain was a true British tar, and by his obstinacy and haughtiness gave us a sample of his brethren in the same line. Capt. Morton treated him and his people in the most polite and generous manner, and he was our table and bottle companion the rest of the voyage. Our arrival with the whole of our convoy is considered as very fortunate, the enemy being in the bay, and very few vessells escape them. I presume we passed them in a very thick fog, which lasted for two days, off Cape Finisteere.

I have sent on the letters you gave me, and as Mr. Ross has taken his passage, and will probably be with you by the time this comes to hand, I will not presume to enter on the situation of our affairs here. He knows them better than I can pretend to, from the short time I have been on shore, but in general I do not like their complection. The enemy keep the sea, and distress the trade greatly; but what is still worse, the resolutions of Congress respecting their money in March last, has given the finishing blow to our credit with foreign nations, for the present at least. I arrived



in this city but yesterday ; shall set out for Paris in the course of next week, where I shall be more fully and better informed, and from thence will write you more particularly. Meantime I pray you to present my compliments to Mrs. Morris, and be assured I am ever, with the most unalterable attachment,

Dear Sir, yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Robert Morris, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO GOULARDE AND MOYLAN.

Nantes, 4th August, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,—Inclosed I send you a letter from Col. Griffin, who gave me with it an order to purchase for him a few articles in France ; counting on you for a reimbursement of this, I presume, he has advised you in the inclosed. I shall go for Paris in a few days, where your favors directed to care of Monsr. Chaumont will meet me. I have the honor to be, with much Respect, Gentlemen, Yours &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. Goularde & Moylan.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SIMEON DEANE.

Nantes, 4th August, 1780.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am at last happily arrived. We anchored the 26th, the 27th I went up to Rochfort. The heat was excessive, beyond what I ever experienced ; and the fatigues of the voyage brought on a lassitude rather than any real disorder, and I passed a week at Rochfort and Rochelle before I set out on my journey. I came here yesterday, and shall go on for Paris sometime next week, having recovered myself perfectly from my fatigues. You must not ex-

pect anything very particular from me as to the situation of our public affairs here ; in general, I fear, they are rather worse than what I predicted when in Virginia. The Enemy during this campaign have kept the sea, and it was by the favor of a thick fog that we escaped them. France and Spain will, however, have an undoubted superiority in the West Indies, which must bring G. Britain to reasonable terms next winter. My son, I hear, is well ; I met my friend Mr. de Monthieu at Rochelle, who told me he was well grown and spoke French perfectly well ; in a word, he said I should find him just what I could wish him to be. This, even after making the discount essential on such occasions, is very pleasing to a father who has not seen his only son for four years ; it revived my spirits, and did more to shake off the disorders I felt creeping upon me than all the doctors in France could have done ; and I have the pleasure to assure you that I do not find that the abuse and ill treatment I have met with in America have done me any injury here, but of this I shall be a better judge in a few weeks. I shall not have time to write our Barnabas Deane ; send him a copy of this. Arthur Lee sailed about three weeks since ; my letter to Congress must (if not already) be delivered to them. As he is gone charged with all the malice and revenge which hell is capable of inspiring him with, and for me, having long since entered the lists, I am determined to fight my adversaries in Congress, or out, to the last, and in a manner that will not, I trust, cause my friends to blush for me. We took two valuable prizes on our passage, and, by accident, missed taking of five. The two taken will amount to upwards of twenty thousand pounds sterling ; one of them, of eighteen guns, fought us at long shot more than one hour. The Captain being a resolute, hardy seaman, would not strike until he saw us bear directly upon him and prepared to give him our broad-side. Tobacco was dull, at eighty livres, before our arrival ; I fear it will look down from that. I shall write you

by every opportunity, and hope some of my letters will come to hand. The resolution of Congress, of March last, respecting our money, have done us infinite prejudice here, and certain passages of their circular letter, to which you will recollect that I often referred, are thrown in our faces on this side the water, and with justice, in my opinion, and Continental money and Continental credit are, if possible, lower here than with you. But I shall run into politics; I will therefore stop. Praying you to present my compliments to our friends in Virginia, I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S.—[Translated from cipher.] Congress are in as much disgrace in Europe as in America, and the Americans are almost ashamed to defend their nation where they are sure to meet with Persons who complain of being ruined by their trust in the honesty of Congress. The merchants of Europe suffer greatly. They think Industry ruined, and they call for Peace.

Both the Courts are making great pretence to continue the war. Nothing will be certainly decided this season, unless events help England, which is most probable. The success and confidence of the English are increased. This may surprize you, but it is a fact.

Mr. Simeon Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO SAMUEL CHASE.

Nantes, August 7th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I have been about ten days in France, having fortunately arrived at Rochfort. The enemy were in the bay, and we passed them in a thick fog, as we learn since our arrival. The commerce of this Kingdom has suffered much this season, and the risque in going to and returning from America is become so great, but more especially the state of our money has well nigh discouraged every one from

adventuring further. Political news I can give you but little to be depended on, not having yet reached the fountain; but in general England appears determined to prosecute the war. The success of Clinton, and some advantages at sea, have raised their spirits; on the other hand, France is making the greatest preparations of ships, to increase their navy, and America, the West Indies included, will be the theatre of war. Count D'Estaing is gone to Spain to take command of the united fleet, which, if it is joined by that at Brest, &c., will be much superior to the enemy, who have hitherto during this season kept the sea. France having sent a large fleet into the West Indies, necessarily lessened their force in these seas. The disturbances in London have been great, but are subsided, and they are now hanging up the criminals in every street; but of this the public papers will inform you. Your staple, tobacco, was dull at 80 livres when we arrived; I fear it will now fall even below that price. I set out for Paris this week, and having many letters to write, have only time to assure you I am, with sincere attachment, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S. [Cipher translated.]—Compliments to Colonel Dorsey, &c. The resolutions of Congress, of the 18th of March, have done America prejudice in France and throughout Europe. America has sunk in the credit of the mercantile people of the world, and in the political. The ministry of France has the report; it will be made the most of in connection with the complaints of the merchants. The resolution of Congress have done us more mischief than the army of the enemy. Our friends ashamed of us, our enemies triumph, and an American in high credit in Europe is unwilling to appear in public.

Parts from the letter of Congress, of the 13th of September, are thrown in here, as "a bankrupt, faith-

less republic." Read the letter, and then say what the world has a right to say of America.

Adieu.

S. D.

Samuel Chase, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Nantes, August 8th, 1780.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I arrived at Rochfort the 27th ulto., and am here on my way for Paris. I desired our Simeon Deane, in Virginia, to send you a copy of my letter to him, not then expecting to have time to write you by this conveyance. My son, I learn, is well at Paris. Our passage was fortunate tho' tedious, being forty-two days. We made two valuable prizes, West Indiamen for Liverpool; one of them, eighteen guns, fought us more than an hour. Our arrival with our whole fleet was indeed lucky, as the English have this season kept the sea, and done infinite mischief to the trade of this kingdom. We are supposed to have escaped by favor of a thick fog, as we passed near their station. The tumults in London have been excessive; they are now appeased, and the King and Ministry have gained, rather than lost, by that mad manœuvre. They are now trying and executing the criminals, in London, who have merited the severest punishment. As to politics, I must be excused until I get to Paris. We are impatient to hear of Monsr. Terney and his forces gone to our assistance. I hope my countrymen will exert themselves, and drive the enemy from New York this summer; this event will give a new face to our affairs on both sides the water; without this I must tell you they are, in my opinion, more critical than ever, and at a proper time I will give you my reasons. The resolutions of Congress on the currency have put a finishing blow to our credit, private as well as public, in Europe. You will present

my compliments to Mr. Webb's family, to friends in Connecticut, particularly Col. Wadsworth and Mr. Hosmer. I am, my Dear Brother, yours,

S. DEANE.

[Cipher translated.] P. S.—Take care lest you go too far in venturing on the new matter. If the times turn worse, there is no prospect of our gaining the venture. You may rely it will go the way of its predecessor. Keep this to yourself, nor confide it to any one.

Mr. B. Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JAMES WILSON.

Nantes, August 8th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I have been in France but a few days, arrived at Rochfort, and am on my way to Paris; cannot, therefore, pretend to give you the state of affairs with any certainty; but, in general, there appears less hopes of peace than I expected. England appears determined, though without one ally in Europe, and shaken to the center by internal commotions; and though the maritime neutral powers, from Holland northward, appear to be forming a confederacy to oppose the British claims of supremacy on the ocean, yet neither king or parliament appear in the least disposed to relax; on the contrary, their haughtiness increases with the danger, and they seem as if they meant to defy the world. Hitherto their fleet has kept the sea this season, and with their cruisers have done infinite mischief; it appears that we escaped them with our little fleet in a fog, otherways I might now have been in lodgings, free of charge, in London. The success of Clinton, to the southward, has prejudiced our affairs greatly, but the success of our enemies is nothing in comparison to the injury which the resolu-

tions of Congress have done us; their circular letter of the 13th of Sept. last was translated and circulated through France; it was universally read and admired. When the resolutions of Congress in March last were published, you cannot easily conceive what a reverse it occasioned in the sentiments and opinion of Europe with respect to us; in a word, it was the most fatal blow that could have been struck at our credit, our commerce, and our character as a nation. I try to persuade myself and others that they are misunderstood, but never having understood them myself in any other light than that of an implicit, if not an avowed, breach of faith and a bankruptcy, what can I say when questioned? Indeed, I have avoided as far as possible entering on the subject, and for that purpose have took care to see nobody since my being in this city (three days since), a few old friends excepted. Count D'Estaing is gone to Spain to command the united fleet, and France is increasing her navy, having many fine ships on the stocks and almost ready for sea. The number of ships wanted for the American service in the West Indies, as well as on the Continent, has, as I have been informed, prevented their grand fleet from putting to sea, so early and in France, this season, as last, but they will soon have a superiority in the European ocean. I am impatient to hear of the operations of Mr. Ternay; no accounts are as yet received from him since his sailing. The taking of New York will give our affairs a happy turn, very much depend on it. I have heard nothing from Mr. Bird; shall write you again from Paris on our particular affairs. Pray write by every opportunity, and freely, under the cypher, which I have now no time to make use of. My compliments to Mrs. Wilson, and be assured, I am ever, with sincere friendship and respect, Dear Sir, Yours &c.,

S. DEANE.

James Wilson, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO PAUL JONES.

Nantes, August 8th, 1780.

DEAR SIR, — I had flattered myself with having the pleasure of meeting you in France, and paying you in person my compliments on the honor you have acquired personally, and on the reputation you have given to the American arms in Europe; but being obliged to pursue my journey for Paris, am disappointed, and can only assure you that no man entertains a higher respect for your person and services, which will, I am confident, meet with due honors and rewards on your arrival in America. I cannot suppose that you flatter yourself to escape without finding among the base, the envious, and the interested part of our countrymen, men who will not only refuse you the justice due to your conduct and bravery, but will attempt even to go farther. Such characters are to be found in every nation, and in every climate. But though, unfortunately, America has at this time rather more than its proportion, yet I can with pleasure assure you that when I left America, there was but one sentiment common to all parties respecting you, and but one voice, which was what gave pleasure to your friends.

I have taken the liberty of troubling you with a few letters to my friends in America, which, on your arrival, please to send to the post office; or, if at Philadelphia, give them to our mutual friend, Mr. Morris. Should any accident happen fatal to your safe arrival, I desire they may be destroyed.

Wishing you a short and agreeable passage, I have the honor to be, with the most sincere respect and attachment,

Yours, &amp;c.,

S. DEANE.

I shall be happy to hear of your success, and at all times to render you any services in my power. A



letter to care of Doctor Franklin will come safe to hand.

Capt. Paul Jones.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO SAMUEL AND J. H. DELAP.

Nantes, August 8th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Harrison of Virginia sent me the inclosed letters, invoices, and orders a few days before I sailed, to which I replied that on my arrival at Bordeaux I should deliver them to you when I did myself the honor of writing to you from Rochelle. I had not these papers at hand, being packed up with my baggage. I now send them forward, and pray you to execute Mr. Harrison's orders. You will see that the blankets wanted are of the coarse and common sort. I hope, therefore, the proceeds of the tobacco may be sufficient; if not, it will be best to make an equal deduction on each article ordered. I shall go on for Paris on Sunday, where I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you. Meantime I have the honor to be,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. Samuel & J. H. Delap,  
Bordeaux.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO WILLIAM DUER.

Nantes, August 8th, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—Having been but a few days on shore, I am not informed of particulars of which you, as well as I, wish to be ascertained; I arrived the 28th ulto. at Rochfort, and am here on my way to Paris, and shall go on Sunday at farthest. You are sensible how little dependence is to be placed on the news of

the day in the out ports of this Kingdom, and therefore will excuse my entering on a detail of what is reported and believed to-day, to be contradicted perhaps to-morrow. In general I do not find that prospect of peace which I flattered myself with. England, though lately shaken to its center by internal commotions, tho' without one ally, and tho' the Northern maritime powers appear confederating to oppose her sovereignty on the ocean, seems to increase her haughtiness, and her national spirit rises in proportion to the dangers which threatens; in short, all parties are to appearance resolved on prosecuting the war at all events, and the only real dispute is, in reality, who shall direct.

The late violences in London have issued in favor of the Ministry. The horrid excesses and barbarities committed by the mob in London, under the name of the Protestant Associations, have destroyed all the associations in England, and cast a disgrace, however unjust, on the very name of associations for the present. Tho' the national debt of England is now at least 200 million sterling, the Minister raises money without any perceptible difficulty, and stocks are higher than they were two years since. The naval force necessary in the West Indies and North America to give France a decided superiority there, has given the English fleet and cruisers an opportunity of keeping the sea this season in Europe; they have greatly distressed the trade. We escaped them by good fortune, in thick weather, much to the surprize of our friends here. Comte D'Estaing has gone to Spain to take command of the united fleets, which will be unquestionably superior to the enemy, and we impatiently expect to hear of something capital from the forces carried out by Monsr. Terney in concert with General Washington. The navy of this Kingdom is rapidly augmenting in number, and I am credibly informed that by the close of the year they will have upwards of eighty ships of the line in commission, most of them fine new ships;

all this effected without any new impositions on the subjects, demonstrates the immense resources of this Kingdom, and will, I hope, bring our enemies to reason e'er it be long. As I shall write you from Paris, excuse my adding any thing more to this of a public nature ; for our private concern I will say one word.

[Cipher translated.] The loss of Charlestown and the situation of the southern states have done us great injury in France and in Europe, but the resolves of Congress of the 18th of March have given the death blow to our national honor, and injured all. Especially the Letter of Congress of the 13th of September last has been translated into French and spread. It is now compared with our promises, and the more disagreeable reflections made against us the more they appear just. In short, the character and credit of it is almost as low in Europe as in America. Jay is at Madrid, but in a public character that can cautiously assist any private attempts here at ventures as hinted. Adams is nearly as unpopular as Lee at Paris, for his manners are absurd.

Adieu.

S. DEANE.

Col. William Duer.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BENJAMIN HARRISON, JR.

Nantes, August 8th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—The fleet left the Fier Roderique off the river Bordeaux, and finding myself obliged to go on to Paris, I enclosed to Messrs. Delap your orders respecting the proceeds of your tobacco, and requested him to attend to them. The price of tobacco is but dull at eighty livres, and with the difference of weight and incident changes the net proceeds may be inadequate to the whole of your order. I therefore desired Messrs. Delap, should that be the case, to ship you of every article in your order, to the amount of the

net proceeds in proportion to the order given by you. As you had not given a preference to any one article, I judged this the most certain manner of answering your expectation, and hope it will be agreeable. I have nothing material to add, but to pray you to present my compliments to your honored father and family, to your spouse, and to be assured I am, with sincere esteem, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Benjamin Harrison, Junr., Esqr.

[August 10th wrote Mr. Moylan, and inclosed the above and the letter for Mr. Wilson, to be delivered to Commodore Jones. S. D.]

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Nantes, August 8th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—We arrived at Rochfort the 28th ulto., and I am now here, on my way to Paris; cannot therefore give you any thing in the political way until I can obtain more certain intelligence than what is to be met with here; in general there is no appearance of a speedy peace, nor of any other powers engaging on either side. The neutral powers are endeavoring to form a confederacy for the protection of their commerce against the claims of Britain to search and detain them if trading with the powers at war. A congress of ministers from all the Northern powers has been proposed to be held at the Hague for this purpose, but nothing has been done as yet, and in the meantime the British ships search and detain neutral vessells as formerly. Their fleet has kept the sea this season, and greatly distressed the trade of this kingdom. We narrowly escaped them by the favor of a thick fog in the bay, where they had just before taken great part of the inward bound West India men; this, with their success in America, has increased their

haughtiness, and they seem to defy Europe to unite against them. Their stocks and public credit are higher now than when I left France in 1778. It appears that the theatre of the war will in future be in America, the islands included, and that a superiority there must finally decide the contest. We are impatient to hear from Monsr. Terney, and our hopes are principally grounded on the probability of his succeeding, that is, as to affairs on the continent. Mr. Williams will send you by this ship the state of the account of the articles he shipped you. Please to present my compliments to Mrs. Thomson, and to Mr. Dickinson and lady; and be assured I am ever, with the most sincere attachment and respect, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Charles Thomson, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC MOSES.

Nantes, August 9th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you one line yesterday, just to enclose a letter to my Brother; you will receive that with this at the same time. I hear nothing of Mr. Myers. As to Loan Office Certificates they will not at present sell for any thing; possibly I may, however, do something with them at Paris, for which I shall set out in a day or two. I sent on your letter to Mr. Delap, and wrote him on the subject, as I found it impossible for me to go that way at this time, without great inconvenience. Tobacco was at 80 livres on our arrival, which was the 28th ulto.; it has since rather looked down from that. The most profitable business from France at this time is to the West Indies; sugar is 80 livres per ct., and I can but think, with your connections at St. Eustatia, you may do something worth your attention in that way. Capt. Jones is the only vessel like to sail soon from these parts. I hear there are several at Bordeaux, where I

have wrote, and shall, as soon as I arrive in Paris, and inform myself of the state of affairs, set myself to fulfil our engagements, in which I have no doubt of succeeding. If you can strike out a voyage in the sugar way from St. Eustatia, I will take an interest to the amount of five hundred pounds sterling, if my Brother in Virginia is in a situation to supply the funds without injuring his other concerns. The loss of Charleston, and the damage done the trade of France by the English fleet, and cruisers who have covered the sea this season, have greatly discouraged the merchants; but as to the American commerce, the resolves of Congress of March last have done us more hurt than every other circumstance. As I am only on my journey I defer writing more particularly untill I arrive at Paris, where at the fountain head I shall be able to form a better judgment; meantime I am, with sincere esteem,  
Dear Sir,

Yours, &amp;c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S. [Cipher translated.]—Americans are at this time in bad credit in England, and unless we vanquish the English in Georgia, or do some thing about New York, I fear peace is far off. The action of Congress of March last has ruined our Credit and Character as a nation and almost as individuals. It will be made a national affair, and the Court of England will see payment done to the English merchants at all events.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO THE PRESIDENT OF  
CONGRESS.

Passy, August 9th, 1780.

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THE unexpected delay of Mr. Deane's arrival has retarded the settlement of the joint accounts of the commission, he having had the chief management of

the commercial part, and being therefore best able to explain difficulties. I have just now the pleasure to hear that the *Fier Rodrigue*, with her convoy from Virginia, arrived at Bordeaux all safe, except one tobacco ship that foundered at sea; the men saved; and I have a letter from Mr. Deane that he is at Rochelle; proposes to stop a few days at Nantes, and then proceed to Paris, when I shall endeavor to see that business completed with all possible expedition.

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*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., Wharton Ed., IV. 22.*

TO WILLIAM DUER.

Paris, August 23d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you the 8th from Nantes, and finding the ship is not yet sailed, add to what I then informed you of. Our contract for masts is accepted of by the Minister, on condition that the three first cargoes pass examination. I have been here but a few days, and have seen him but once. I hope to get the examination made in America, and shall write you again in a few days at large on that subject. I have written to Mr. Jay, and inclosed our friend Don Juan's letter to the Minister, which I have prayed him to deliver and obtain an answer. I doubt not it will be favorable. The small bills you remitted to Mr. Chaumont to answer the bills you drew on him in favor of La Fargue have every one of them been protested. I shall return them, and must pray you to take them up of my brother, as the disappointment has been very hard on this poor man. I have taken my old lodgings with Doctor Franklin, and do not find my character to have suffered here by the abuse I met with in America during my absence from France. Would to God I could say as much for our country, but I still hope for better times. Something may be done with Morris in America. I shall attend to the subject the moment Bancroft returns. Francy is now absent on account of his

health, but is expected to return in five or six weeks, by time I shall have arranged some other affairs. My compliments to Robert Livingston, Esqr. What I have added you may shew them in confidence not mentioning me, for I know how ready most are in [cipher translated] America to make public whatever is written from hence. Our affairs are at present more critical, in my opinion, than at any former period. We disagree and quarrel with one another in America in everything; except Franklin and Mr. Deane, only two of us Commissioners or Ministers, among all, have ever agreed, and rarely any individuals. The enthusiasm with which France embraced our cause and us at first, is gone, and the resolutions of Congress of the 18th of March last irretrievably damned our credit and honor. Add to this the success of England at sea, and the language held by Lee and others, and especially by Adams, who not only in private, but in his letters to the Minister, has asserted that America is not obliged to France, but the contrary, and that England will gladly settle with us at any price. These and other circumstances justify what I say, and call for your serious reflections. Adams has gone so far that the Minister has questioned several about his letter, and remonstrated severely against these declarations, on which he is gone to Holland. In a word, Adams is as obnoxious in France as Lee, tho' not so much despised by the people at large. I see but few people to doubt the most disagreeable of all secret actions—infidelity by ourselves. I am daily confirmed in my opinion that a plot is formed and now executing to defeat our treaty with France, and return to England on the best terms we can, and that Adams and Lee are in it. Why, other ways, would Adams wantonly risk a quarrel with the people and Minister of France? That Adams has done it is of public notoriety. The Ministers letters condemn it in strong terms; I have seen them, and why does Adams go to Holland at this time? In short, we are now in a very suspicious and disgraceful



light. Our national credit is lost, and unless something decisive is done this year against New York, the English will succeed, and defeat our army. Mark the event. Heaven grant I may prove a false prophet. Jay and Carmichael are in Madrid, but in public characters. Spain will not at present do anything, and our credit is too low for a market any where. The merchants in France execrate Congress, and lay more on that body than they deserve.

Adieu.

S. DEANE.

Col. William Duer.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, August 23d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I am very apprehensive lest my inattention may have led me to commit an error in speaking to you of the goods sent out to my brother, by Mr. Ridley. As I never heard my brother mention that gentleman's name, nor say any thing of goods received on your account, I was induced to conclude he had received none. After taking leave of my brother at Williamsburg, he sent me a bundle of papers, wrapped up and bound with a tape, superscribed "Papers of Simeon Deane." Supposing them to be papers relative to his particular concern, I put them away among other files without examining. On opening my papers here, I find the inclosed, left, as you will see, open for my perusal. You will see that my brother received but one trunk, and that the property of Mr. Mollier, which accounts for his not having mentioned to me his having received any goods of yours. I am extremely sorry for this accident, by which you did not receive the letters and papers designed for you, when I was at Nantes, but as they will still be in season for your orders by Commodore Jones, hope that no damage will ensue. I delivered the letter for Mr. Alexander, and had the pleasure of

dining with him on Sunday with Doctor Franklin, with whom I lodge. When you are at leisure you will remember my account and that of my brothers, to draw them out ; the letter I wish you to send on to him, with your orders, by Commodore Jones, and duplicates, as it is important he should be informed how to proceed with the effects in hand. I have nothing new to write, but with best compliments to Mrs. Williams and Miss Alexander to assure you I am, with the most sincere attachment and esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Compliments to Captains Green and Robinson ; tell the latter that Comm. Gillon has got the ship from Amsterdam out to sea.

J. Williams, Esqr., Nantes.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MR. HOLKER.

Paris, August 23d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I parted with your son in Philadelphia the last of November past, and left America the 9th June. As I passed the winter and spring in Virginia, I brought no letters from him, nor can give you any news of him later than what you must already have received. He met with a misfortune last winter by fire, but his loss was not so considerable as was at first apprehended, although I doubt not you have already been informed ; yet I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of assuring you that he was very happily situated and universally esteemed and caressed by the good people in America, in Philadelphia in particular, where I passed the most of my time in the same circle with him, as agreeably as the circumstances of the country would possibly admit of. I am told that you will probably be in Paris soon. When I promise myself the pleasure of embracing you, and acquainting you with

many things, which, though not of immediate importance, will not be disagreeable to you to hear; in the meantime I pray you to present my compliments to your spouse, and to be assured that I am

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Holker, Rouen.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Paris, August 23d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I flattered myself with having the pleasure of meeting you here, recovered from the ill state of health in which you left America, as well as from the fatigues of your unfortunate voyage, but am consoled under the disappointment with the hopes that leisure and retirement will soon re-establish and restore your health, and that I shall soon have the honor of waiting on you here, and of paying you my respects in person; in the meantime I congratulate you on your being so fortunate as to arrive safe at last, notwithstanding the misfortunes of your voyage. I left Philadelphia the last of November, and was detained in Virginia by the severity of the winter, which preventing us from loading or repairing our ships; it was the 9th of June before we left York, and the 14th when we got to sea. I cannot, therefore, give you any news from America of a public nature with which you are not already acquainted. Our friend Don Juan died suddenly at the camp where he was on a visit to General Washington. Mr. Gouverneur Morris, by the oversetting of a phaeton, fractured his leg so that an amputation was necessary. He was recovering. Our friends in Philadelphia were well, and delighted with Chevalier Luzerne, who, I find by letters from Mr. Morris and others, has at once succeeded you in office, and in the respect and affection of America, and it is impossible that he should merit or enjoy

greater than what fell to you, and which must ever be preserved for you. I sent forward, by the favor of your brother, a letter from Mr. Wilson, who acquainted me with the subject; if any resolution has been taken upon it, I pray to have the honor of transmitting it to him as early as possible. I have taken my former lodgings at Passy, where any letter you shall honor me with will find me. Praying for the speedy re-establishment of your health, I have the honor to be

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Monsr. Gerard.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN JAY.

Paris, August 23d, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have been in town since Saturday last, and now improve the first courier to open afresh our correspondence. We received accounts in America, before my sailing, of your misfortunes in the confederacy, your putting in to Martinico and subsequent safe arrival in Spain, and I now beg leave to assure you I felt sensibly for you in every stage of your adventures, and most sincerely congratulate you and Mrs. Jay on your safe arrival, and on the addition to your family which Doctor Franklin informs me you have been blessed with. I left Philadelphia early in December, and was detained in Virginia by the severest winter ever known in America, and its consequences until the 9th of June, when we left York, and on the 14th got out to sea; the winter was so extreme that the great bays of Chesapeake and Delaware were frozen over, and coaches crossed from Annapolis to Kent Island, and to Baltimore, as on solid ground. This prevented our ship from either loading or repairing until spring. From this circumstance you will not expect from me any thing relative to the state of American affairs later than what you must already be

in possession of. The news of the surrender of Charleston, the only event of importance since you left America, was received, but on the day on which I embarked; cannot, therefore, form any opinion what effects it may have on the minds of the people at large. Their spirits were greatly raised with the expectation of the arrival of Mr. Ternay's squadron and the troops. They were not, I find, arrived, at least in New England, the 27th of June. I have taken my old lodgings with Doctor Franklin. My meeting with him and my other friends here has given me the most sincere pleasure; and, being happily freed from every political concern whatever, hope, that whilst I enjoy the society of my friends here, my enemies in America will forget me. Though, as I can never forget my friends there, my anxiety for their fate can but abate the pleasure which I enjoy from the friendly reception I have met with here. Our late worthy friend, Don Juan, died a few weeks before I sailed. On my parting with him last fall, he gave me the inclosed letter, under a flying seal, as it was possible I might have delivered it myself. It is on a subject of very great importance to me and those interested with me. I must, therefore, pray you to deliver it in person in the state it is, or sealed, as you shall judge most proper, and that you will inform me of the reception it meets with, in your letters, under cover to Doctor Franklin. Mr. Adams is still in Holland, whither on a voyage of business or pleasure is unknown. I expect to go that way this fall, and southward in the winter. Wherever I may be, your letters, directed as above, will be sure to find me, and can never fail to give pleasure to one who so highly esteems and respects you, and who values himself so much on your friendship. I remember that I gave you a cypher; I have with me the duplicate, but do not use it in this, not knowing whether you have preserved yours. Indeed, I have nothing at this time which requires me to make use of it, except my

opinion of our political situation, and that is but poorly worth troubling you with; but as your friendship has set some value on it, and as a bystander often sees as much of the game as those who play, I am free, when it can be safely done, to open my sentiments to you on the subject with that unreservedness what true friendship requires, and which our common interest in the fate of our country calls for; and confident that they will not be communicated to any other person, I shall on that subject write to you, not as to a Minister, but as to a Friend. I pray you to present my best respects to Mrs. Jay, and to accept my best wishes for your mutual happiness.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jay,  
Madrid.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JAMES WILSON.

Paris, August 23d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you the 8th from Nantes, to which refer. I have been in Paris a week, and my sentiments given you in my last are confirmed. I have seen the Ministers and have taken my old lodgings with Doctor Franklin. The letter from our late friend Don Juan to the Minister, I send on this day with a letter to Mr. Jay. I hope to succeed, as the proposals made here on the same subject have been approved of. I have not had time, from the number of visits I have been obliged to make, to enter on the subject of lands, except generally, and can only say I think the prospect good. I have sent on your letter to Mr. Gerard, and written to him myself on the subject. He is in Alsac for the benefit of his native air and the waters, but his Brother, who has succeeded him here, and to whom I gave your letter, assures me he will return in about six weeks. I shall inform you as

soon as any thing is done. We have nothing new, but are impatient to hear from the West Indies and from you. Mr. Adams is in Holland, whither on a journey of business or pleasure is uncertain ; but I am sorry to find him (tho' by no means my friend) viewed here in so disagreeable a light as he is. He has firmly attached himself to Arthur Lee & Co., and invariably promotes to the utmost of his power the ambitious and dangerous views of the junto. He has given Doctor Franklin and the Minister much trouble, and rendered himself odious to the merchants ; in short, he openly declares that America is under no obligations to France, but the contrary, which if it were as true as it is the reverse, would be a very unpopular and impolitic language. No prospect of peace at present. Shall give you early notice of what passes here of importance. I cannot conclude without telling you that the friendly and kind reception I have met with in France, in a great measure ballances my sense of the treatment I met with from my enemies in America. I pray my compliments to Mrs. Wilson and to the friendly circle we were so happy in, and be assured that I am, with the most sincere attachment, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

James Wilson, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC MOSES.

Paris, August 27th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you from Nantes the 8th, and have now been in this city a week. Nothing new has occurred since my last. Moses Myers has not been here, nor do I hear any thing from him, which surprizes me greatly. There is no prospect of peace at present ; much depends on the issue of this campaign in America. I find what I wrote you from Nantes to be true as to our affairs here. Loan Office Certificates are of

no value at all. I design to go for Holland in about three weeks, and shall endeavor to ship from thence to St. Eustatia some goods of which will give you seasonable notice. I have met with a reception here as kind and generous as it was cruel and ungrateful in America. I have been here but a week, which I have spent in visiting my old friends, and have been twice to see the Minister. As I have many letters to write, have neither time nor a subject to enlarge on, but am, with sincere attachment, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S. [Cipher translated.]—Our affairs are in the most dangerous position. Our credit is gone entirely. The power of England and Spain has raised greatly. The power of France little or nothing. The French fleet having been on the coast of England through the summer, has retired and disbanded, and even in the of England the prices of funds are higher than at the beginning of the war, and the English do not propose peace. The merchants in England are tired of the war. Mr. Adams has given great umbrage to the Court, and offended by his conduct and his language, and is gone to Holland in anger. More mischief, indeed, or than Lee made here, is impossible. From these hints form your judgement.

S. D.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO THOMAS MUMFORD.

Paris, August 28th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours by your nephew, who arrived at Paris some days before me, and most sincerely congratulate you and sister Nanny on your happy union. I esteem no persons more, and my esteem being grounded not on accident, but on long and intimate acquaintance, I have wished to see you united



ever since your situation has been such as to permit the same. May you be long happy in each other. I am sure that you will, and that you will remember one whose first wish and prayer is that you may be so. I have many letters to write, and arrived in town but a few days since, and having many visits to pay and receive, must excuse my not writing to your brother and other friends in your neighborhood; be so kind as to make an apology for me to them. Your nephew has been sick of the fever and ague ever since his arrival, but is now recovering. I really know not how to dispose of him. It is impossible to place him in any reputable house, without a sum of money, which I have no orders, nor am in circumstance to advance; and unacquainted with the language, or with accounts, he can be of no service to me, and to send him back, besides the disappointment and loss of time, will expose him to be made a prisoner, as very few vessels escape the vigilance of the enemy, who at this time seem to cover the ocean in Europe. Our fleet escaped by the greatest good fortune imaginable; first, by thick weather off Cape Finisterre, and afterwards by falling in with the land off Rochfort, not twelve hours after the enemy had left the ground with several prizes they had made within sight of the land. The approbation which my well intended and faithful services have met with from you, Mr. Hosmer, and a few others, gives me great pleasure; and I must assure you that the ingratitude and abuse I have met with gives me no pain in comparison of what I feel at a view of the desperate situation into which our affairs are brought by a set of men who, to promote their private and sinister views, and to wound me, have plunged daggers in the heart of our country. I do not speak from personal chagrin, disappointment; those sensations are in a great measure worn off, even by the repetition of calumny, ingratitude, and abuse which I have met with; and a man conscious of his own integrity, and of having rendered his country the

most essential services, such as have been acknowledged and approved by the greatest monarch and the first personages in Europe, requires but little aid from philosophy to look down on and despise the malignant envy and base ingratitude of any men or set of men whatever. The abusive treatment I have met with in America has done me no injury here. Would to God I could say as much of my country! But when an enlightened and generous people, attentive to, and in some degree jealous of, our motions and affections, find the man who put all to the hazard, who laboured incessantly, and with success, to ally France with America, received at first, on his return, with coldness and neglect, and finally with indignity and insult, they cannot avoid drawing the most unfavourable conclusions; especially when they add to this the stile and conduct of but too many Americans on both sides the water; on this side, of those even in the highest posts of trust and confidence. Must it not at once excite the surprize, if not the indignation, of a French man, to hear an American plenipotentiary, sent over to negotiate a peace, declare in public, and without reserve in his conversation, and even in his letters to the Minister, that America owed no obligation to France for their interposition? Similar to this has been the language of two others, formerly Ministers from Congress in Europe, and who, after rendering themselves odious and contemptible here beyond what you can have any conception of, are embarked for America. Their character, indeed, has long since been so well known here, that their stile of speaking could have but little influence on the minds of people; but it receives weight when enforced by a person of high reputation in America for his political abilities and patriotism, and who took an early and distinguished part in our affairs. In short, my dear friend, the impudence of these men, to say no worse of it, has wounded us most essentially here, whilst the resolutions of Congress of March last, and the general com-

plaint of the merchants here of their losses by the depreciation, and of the want of faith in Congress to redeem their bills, have effectually ruined our credit, public, as well as private ; and I am sorry to tell you a melancholy truth, that an American is now as unpopular in France as they and their cause were popular when I left it two years since. There is no loan made, nor a probability, scarcely a possibility, of one in Europe. The trade of this kingdom has suffered so greatly that insurance can scarcely be made at any rate. And as men who suffer often are unjust in their complaints, presuming on the right of a sufferer to complain, so, too, many in this case charge every thing to the American war. As I shall not by this vessel write to any other of my friends in your circle. I will be the more particular to you, confident you will not misuse my freedom to you by communicating this to any but those on whose prudence you can rely, and that you will not let any part of it be made public.

An armed neutrality is proposed between the Maritime Powers at Peace, and if credit is to be given to public reports, it is near a conclusion ; yet England continues to stop and search and detain neutral vessels trading to France or Spain. As formerly, that nation at this moment acts a part equally surprizing and unaccountable. At war with France, Spain, and America ; without one ally or friendly nation, Portugal excepted ; and menaced by the rest of the Maritime Powers in Europe, they do not relax in the least, but assume an higher tone in proportion as the number of their enemies increases. Their trade has suffered but little, comparatively. Their stocks are higher than they were two years ago, and the Ministry find less difficulty in raising money. They have made captures to an immense amount, and in the East Indies command every thing at pleasure. The spirit of the nation (though divided, and lately shaken to its centre by the most violent and extraordinary commo-

tion known in Europe for a century past), it is at the highest pitch, and no call for peace, not even among their merchants. These are facts which surprize me, and I can neither explain or account for them easily at this time. On the other hand, the resources of France are naturally immense; and by the management of a great financier, Mr. Necker, the whole expence of the war has been hitherto defrayed without one shilling charge or imposition on the people, meerly by his economy. This demonstrates the ability of France, and to what a length they may continue the war. They are increasing their navy with new ships, building in all their ports. This seems to shew as if, in the end, they must run their fierce and high spirited rivals out of breath. To me there appears every degree of probability that this must be the case at last, but it is, at any rate, certain that peace is at a distance; the favourable moments for effecting so desirable an object have been trifled away; worse, they have been murdered by low, pitiful intrigues and cabals at Philadelphia. But time past is irrevocable; the present only is ours, and it is now the time to look forward, as well as round about us and within ourselves, to rectify the horrid mismanagement our affairs have been under; to quit at once that pitiful, poor, temporizing system of expedients which has rendered our credit, our faith, honor, and character as a nation so low, and to adopt a different one. If you ask what, I say exactly the reverse of the two last years conduct in almost every instance, and to act as well resolve with vigor. When I left France two years since, I little thought it possible that in so short a space we could sink so low in the estimation of the world here, as well as with ourselves. Most surely it never was in the power of our foreign enemies to have caused it. The cause has existed; it has originated among ourselves, not from the professed tories or concealed internal enemies; they never were of consequence enough, either in number or ability, to effect

it; but our wealth, our wicked and interested managers have brought it about, and I charitably and firmly believe a majority of them, without intending it; their attention was too much fixed on their petty private objects to regard any thing else, much less to foresee the fatal consequences of their conduct to their country. Since then the causes of our evils have originated among ourselves; it is in ourselves only that the remedy is first to be searched for and applied. If by our future conduct we acknowledge that we have not virtue and resolution equal to this, the impartial world will judge us deserving of whatever fate we may meet with. For myself, I have done my duty and served my country faithfully, disinterestedly, and with success, whilst permitted to serve her. A consciousness of this alleviates the pain I feel at the prospects before us, though it cannot remove them entirely whilst her interests and honor lie the nearest my heart of any consideration whatever. If I were disposed to be vain, I would draw a comparison between the situation and character of our affairs during the two years I was in public employ and the two last years which have succeeded; but I am not at present inclined to justify myself or confound my enemies by exhibiting the mournful contrast; it will better bear the view at some future period. Besides, I have no necessity to do this, as the comparison is daily made in France by persons whose stations have enabled them to attend impartially to the whole of our history. You will excuse the length of this letter. Our country, I know, is dear to you, and you are not afraid to examine into its true situation and prospects. It is no less dear to me. Though exiled and ungratefully driven from it, and though I had resolved that in future I would neither write nor, if possible, think on our political affairs, and to attend solely to what I have too long neglected, my private, yet my prevailing passion bears down my resolution when I think of America.

For news I have none worth sending. All are in expectation of some great event in America. In Europe nothing general or decisive will be done this season, nor any change in the general system, unless the proposed armed neutrality lay the grounds for one. If it should, as it is probable, the effects will not be sensibly felt until another year. I accept with affection your appellation of brother, and with my best wishes for you and sister Nanny's mutual felicity, I am, my Dear Sir,

Most sincerely yours, S. DEANE.

I lodge with Doctor Franklin. Your letters directed to his care will come safe to hand.

Thomas Mumford, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SIMEON DEANE.

Paris, August 28th, 1780.

DEAR BROTHER,—This is my third since my arrival. [Samuel Wharton] having left Paris a little before I got in, I had no time to settle with him; by Doctor Bancroft's account he owes me a ballance of about five hundred pounds sterling, or something over this sum. Doctor Bancroft has ordered him to pay to you, on my account, and I have written to him on the same subject. I shall probably, in the course of the fall, send you effects to amount of as much more. I wish you, therefore, to persue the plan I proposed to you of getting a good stand at Norfolk for a house, store, and wharf, and if you can purchase one or two hundred acres of good land in the neighborhood, to do it; if heavy timbered the better. I shall go to [Holland] this fall, and by the description given me of the mills we talked of, they may be erected with little expence, and must be of great profit. I shall carefully examine and take a model of them. Meantime I think it will be wise in you to extend your interest in the lands near your old hiding place, if to be done on good terms,

but by no means purchase confiscated states ; my opinion of them is worse than ever. Mr. Williams by his marriage is become heir to a part of Sproul's estate, and is preparing to claim it. Claims will be made in great numbers immediately on a peace, and I am convinced that a restoration will take place of a great part at least of them. The measure is not popular in Europe, and at best is considered as precipitate, and looking like a desire of plunder. I met my son well and finely grown, and well advanced in his exercises for the French tongue ; he speaks and writes it perfectly well. I have not yet resolved where I shall fix him, but probably it will be at Geneva. I wish Mr. Ross could get the falls at Richmond intirely into his hands. I would take an interest, and, residing in Europe, as I must for sometime, could send him out workmen to render the affair of that importance it is capable of. If you purchase as I have advised, let me know, and send exact descriptions and surveys to me, as also of the lands you proposed laying your certificates on. It will be well to inform yourself in season of the proprietors of the Dismal, what are their boundaries and title, and what value they set upon it ; for if the other proposed scheme answers, those lands must be valuable, and I have no inclination at present to labor only for others, having sufficiently suffered already by that. You must not expect any news from us of any importance this season, though we shall be greatly disappointed if you send us none from America. If the proposed Neutrality Armed take place, it will greatly change the course of commerce in Europe, and even in America ; for if Great Britain will not venture on a war with Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland, they must admit them to trade freely with the nations of war. This may produce great consequences. A temporary advantage will certainly result to France and Spain, as by carrying on their commerce in neutral bottoms, they can employ the whole of their seamen in their fleet offensively. I say temporary, for

I doubt much whither it can be a lasting one, since the employing foreigners in their commerce strikes at the main basis of their marine, their native seamen ; for suppose the whole of the sailors of a nation put on board a fleet, and the merchant ships employed to consist intirely of foreigners, they make great efforts for a time, but as soon as the seamen in the ships of war fall off by sickness and accidents unavoidable in war, where are the resources to supply their place ? And must not the marine itself, under this predicament, formidable as it may be at first, become weaker every day, and finally sink to nothing, with the extinction of the present crews, which cannot be recruited, but from foreigners who will not serve, or if they would, might not be worthy of being trusted. This is a part of the ill consequences I apprehend from such a measure ; but too many Ministers are disposed to temporize in Europe as well as America.

Sugar is 80 livres per ct. in France, a much better trade than tobacco, or any other on the continent. I have written to Mr. Thomas Mumford on the subject. If you can contrive a voyage, I would gladly take an interest, but of this I will write you again soon. Meantime I hope you have taken settled lodgings somewhere, and that you take care of your health. I have seen Sabbatier fils and Desprez but once, and then at dinner. I gave them your papers to translate, and shall in my next be able to write you on that subject.

Meantime I am, My Dear Brother,

Yours, &c., S. DEANE.

Mr. Simeon Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, August 29th, 1780.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote you the 8th from Nantes. Have been here about ten days ; found my son in health and well advanced in growth, as well as



in his improvements of mind. I shall probably remove him to Geneva this fall, to finish his education. If so, shall fix him there for two or three years at least. I received your letter from New London, of the 22d June, by G. Mumford, in which you say "public faith and credit are at an end." As you know how often I foretold and lamented this whilst in America, and that the finishing blow was given before I sailed, viz., on the 18th of March last, you could not suppose you informed me of any thing new; but as I saw your name among others to a resolution to take the new paper, equivalent to silver and gold, I fear you have suffered by that patriotic resolve, and that the new currency is rapidly following its predecessor. It is what I have apprehended from the first; and if it descend more rapidly, shall not be any way surprized. That a single state or individual should have greater credit standing alone than when united with twelve others, each having the same security to give, and unitedly pledged, is not to be expected at any time; but impossible after they have unitedly failed, and advertised a dividend of six pence in the pound. From the moment I saw those resolutions, I was convinced of the effects they would have in America, as well as in Europe. The resolutions arrived before me; I am not, therefore, surprized, though extremely mortified to find our public faith and honor, and the very name of an American, made "a by word and reproach among the nations." Read the circular letter of Congress of Septem<sup>r</sup> last, and then say if we can complain of the character which Congress then gave and fixed on their constituents in case certain events took place, which events, they by their subsequent conduct, laboured to bring about, and were, unhappily for our country, successful. Sebor has been sick ever since his arrival here, but is recovering. This, with visiting old friends, &c., has prevented my enquiring much about business, and for news we have none, but daily expect to hear of something important from America and the West

Indies. I have taken my old lodgings at Passy, with Doctor Franklin, to whose care address your letters, and let me hear from you often, and be more particular in your letters than you have hitherto been. Present my compliments to all friends in the public as well as private line. Tell the latter I remember them affectionately, and the former that I have long since watched their motions vigilantly, and that unless they leave off resolving and temporizing, and fall to acting vigorously, they will inevitably ruin their country.

Remember me most Affectionately to our sister and the family.

Adieu. S. DEANE.

Mr. Barnabas Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SAMUEL WHARTON.

Paris, August 30th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Doctor Bancroft does me the favor to inclose this; he has shewn me the contents of his letters, to which beg leave to refer you, and have only to add that you will greatly oblige me by remitting the sum mentioned in his, as early as you can, to my brother Simeon Deane at Williamsburg in Virginia, to whom I have wrote on the subject. It is a great disappointment to me not to have had the pleasure of meeting you here, as it, with many other subjects might have been adjusted and closed. Should you be detained for any time at L'Orient, I will do myself the honor of writing you again, and pray your answer to this and your future correspondence. If you sail before I have time to write to your brother Joseph Wharton, present my compliments, and tell him I shall write by the first opportunity. The post will be gone if I add more, save that I am, with esteem and attachment, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c., S. DEANE.

Mr. Samuel Wharton.

P. S.—I lodge with Doctor Franklin.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO TITUS HOSMER.

Passy, near Paris, Sept. 1st, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I have written a long letter to our mutual friend Mr. Mumford, which he will shew you. I have attentively examined the state of affairs in Europe since my arrival, and reviewed our past as well as present situation, and weighed the probability of what our future must be ; and the result of the whole with me is that our affairs have never been in a more critical state than at this moment, and that nothing but a speedy peace can prevent the most ruinous consequences. Spain does not appear disposed to acknowledge our independence, or to take any part with us. In alliance with France they have come into the war, and will continue it as long as the latter shall choose ; but hitherto they have been of very little, I may say of no actual service, further than what credit their name has given to the war. France has, by the bold economical regulations of Mr. Necker, supported the war without one shilling additional expence to the Kingdom, and will continue to do so, for some time at least, so that they will not begin to borrow, or lay new impositions, untill England must have contracted an immense debt ; what they are already burthened with exceeds any thing ever known or heard of in the history of the world, and, what is more astonishing, they still support their credit and raise money without any apparent difficulty. In a word, the war is now become, on the part of France, a war of finance and credit, and not of decisive measures and hardy enterprize ; this, of course, tends to continue the war for several years to come, and to prevent our receiving any effectual supplies in money from France, whilst our credit being ruined we cannot obtain any from any other quarter. Admiral Graves being superior in force to Mr. Ternay, it is easy to form a judgment in general of the issue of this campaign on the continent, and to foresee that nothing decisive will happen with you any more than with us,

and that we must turn over another leaf of the chapter of accidents unless a peace can be effected in the winter coming. The British fleet has been at sea, and on the coasts of France and Spain, until lately; have greatly distressed the trade of this kingdom; they are now in port, and the equinox approaching, there is no probability of any thing further this season. The public attention is fixed on the proposed armed neutrality, and many form the most sanguine hopes from it. I confess I am very doubtful, first, whither the confederation proposed among the neutral powers will take place, and, next, as to the effects of it on the present contest. It is true that a formidable Russian fleet, that is for number, is now in the Downs. But if Russia was really disposed to act an unfriendly part tow'rds England, would she at once put her whole naval force (which is the case) into the power of the latter? When I reflect further, that celebrated as this Empress is by the panegyrists of the day, that she has on several important occasions shewn herself as subject to whim and caprice as any of her sex, I can form no judgment with any certainty as to the event. Meantime, we are literally without money or credit; our army dwindled to almost nothing, and without the necessary supplies of cloathing and stores, and no effectual measures taken, or resources established to recruit the first and to furnish the latter. When I reflect further on that indifference and langour which prevailed when I left America, and on the rapid decline which our credit and public character have been both in Europe and with ourselves ever since I left France, in 1778, I tremble for the consequences if the war is continued. Ever since our alliance public measures have been so conducted, by the distraction and weakness of our councils, that we have been and are now realizing the fable of the giant and dwarf who made an offensive and defensive league together against their common enemy. The blows which scarcely drew blood from the giant, by glancing only, lopped off a

leg or an arm of his dear little ally ; and on their victory, whilst the giant in full vigor and exultation sung Te Deum, the dwarf, without legs or arms, and with but one eye left, lay almost breathless on the field. But what need of all this to one whose humanity and true patriotism considers an honorable peace as the most desirable event that can possibly happen, and how (you will ask me) can it be obtained ? I cannot attempt, especially in a letter, to be particular on this subject, though I am fully convinced that a peace may be obtained, honorable, advantageous, and satisfactory to all parties if the present crisis is improved, and if wisdom and prudence preside in the negotiations ; but if a haughty, menacing language is held on our part towards even those who have assisted us in our distress, with a refusal to acknowledge favours received from them, our allies will be justly displeased, our enemies will improve the circumstances, and our fate will be duly merited and inevitable. I refer you to Mr. Mumford on the subject, and will only add that a negotiation for peace, situated as affairs are in Europe and with us, is at once a most arduous and delicate undertaking, and to succeed in it requires the art and address of a courtier as much as the firmness of an old republican ; and that one who has not made it his great object to soften and conciliate, to yield, and in degree to conform himself, at least to give way for a time to the passions, the vanity, and even the follies of those he treats with, and who has not learned and practised that first lesson for a negociator of peace under our circumstances, *to win his way by yielding to the tide*, has not the least chance of succeeding. Would to God I could write on a more agreeable subject, but what lies nearest, and with the greatest weight on my heart (in spite of all my resolutions never further to interest myself in public affairs) will dictate to my pen whilst writing to my friends ; and when I reflect on the cruel situation to which we are reduced by the weakness of some and the wickedness of others of a cabal

equally known and execrated by both of us, I forgive the ungrateful and indignant returns I have met with by their accursed intrigues and artifice, by which they have involved the affairs of our country in greater difficulties and distress than of my own in particular. I have taken my old lodgings with Doctor Franklin, and I shall be happy to receive a letter from you, which, directed to his care, will find me, though I may be elsewhere at the time, as I propose a journey to Holland this fall on my private business. Present my compliments to Mrs. Hosmer, and accept my best wishes for your mutual happiness and that of your rising family. I am, with the most sincere esteem and friendship, Dear Sir, your most Obedt. Humble Servt.,  
S. DEANE.

P. S.—I found my son well grown, and he speaks and writes French perfectly well. He lives near me at present. Doctor Bancroft lives in my neighborhood, agreeably situated and much esteemed.

Mr. Hosmer.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Passy, near Paris, Sept. 2d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 3d of July I received yesterday. I wrote you from Nantes the 8th instant, and Mr. Ross not being gone, this may probably come to hand at the same time. I have resolved, as often as you can have done, not to meddle with or write on political affairs, but having fewer private ones on hand, I have broken my resolutions oftener. But on reflection I find such resolutions, taken in their fullest extent, inconsistent with the duty we owe our country, as private citizens, and with what we owe to ourselves. You ought, considered simply as an American citizen and merchant, to be well informed of such political movements and events as affect the interests of our

country and its commerce, without which you will not be always master of the subject when you may have an opportunity of serving the former, or of taking benefit from the latter. I believe you will agree with me in this, and this I will make in future the rule for my political observations to you in my letters. You will learn from Mr. Ross and others from hence, that Loan Office Certificates are in no kind of credit in France ; that the very worst construction has been made of the resolutions of Congress of March last ; and that, in consequence, public credit is gone, and private very low, that no loan has been made ; that there is but little prospect, and hardly a possibility, of one ; that there is greater probability of a continuance of the war than of a speedy peace ; for that our enemy seems to assume a higher stile in proportion to the number of their opponents and their danger. These facts you will be informed of, with many others ; but these you may rely on, and they may be of use in your private, as well as public, concerns. I have kept copies of all my letters to you, and of the postscript, among the rest, of the 15th April last. I am happy to find our sentiments agree. I have only touched on that subject since my arrival, but have found nothing unfavorable, or that has given me cause to doubt of success, in that way, but to the contrary. I will digest my thoughts on this subject after making some further enquiries, and write you particularly on it in a few days. Mr. De Francy set off for Bordeaux a few days after his arrival at Paris. I have the same opinion of him as you express, except that I do not find that the pleasure and diversions of Paris have much hold on him when business calls ; this trait will not lessen his character with you more than with me. I have been so happy as to meet Doctor Franklin, Mr. Chaumont, Mr. Beaumarchais, and the rest of my good old friends here, in perfect health ; this, with the kind reception I have met with from them, has given me the most sincere pleasure, and is sufficient to make

me forget in some degree what I met with from faction and cabal elsewhere. I shall not have time by this conveyance to write Mr. Holker. Present my compliments to him, and tell him I received a letter from his father yesterday from Dieppe, where he had received one from me on his journey to St. Omers and Dunkerque, from the last of which he will return by Paris, to drink, as he says, a *hearty bottle with me*, and enquire after Jack, from whom he complains of not having received any letters for a long time. It cannot be from any neglect of our friend, but people here do not take into consideration the difficulties in the way of our correspondence between the two countries. I am rejoiced to hear of your success in commerce; if knowledge and industry in business, and a generous application of the profits resulting, entitle a man to succeed, you must surpass any man I ever knew, which I wish you to do, not on the consideration of wealth merely, but for the pleasure you will thereby enjoy in being able to promote the ease and happiness of others, whilst you provide for those whom nature and affection have so nearly connected with you. As "an honest man is the noblest work of God," so a well-informed, extensive, and generous merchant is unquestionably the most beneficial to the world, and he may with great justice say :

"For forms of government let fools contest ;  
Whatever is best administer'd is best."

I hope you will not charge me with pedantry for having quoted a few lines which express my sentiments better, and in fewer words, than I am able to do myself. The ravages of the enemy which you mention must inevitably turn out to their own disgrace and disadvantage, but this does not take off the painful sensations we must feel for the present sufferers. As Mr. Ross will inform you so much better personally, than I can do by letter, of the present situation of commercial and other affairs here, it is needless for me to



enter on those subjects. I am now engaging on a full settlement, or, rather, to state in a clear and simple point of view every transaction I have been concerned in, in Europe, and flatter myself that I shall get through in a few weeks, in a manner that will justify your good opinion of me ; and the result I am confident will not cause you or any others to blush for having been my friends. The gentlemen whom you say I shall not meet here, are probably by this time with you. I know not what mischief they may cause in America, but in France they have long since been held in too contemptible a light to injure or prejudice any one. As the only objection against me was my not having carried out my accounts with vouchers, &c., it must be expected they who joined in the complaint must produce on their arrival the most ample and authentic accounts, examined and certified by the Auditor of Congress here, of the many thousand sterling they have received for doing nothing, infinitely worse than nothing. The fact is, they have never said one word to the Auditor on the subject ; how they will be treated time will shew. I am not solicitous about it ; my own affairs are sufficient for me ; but if Congress do not maintain a consistent conduct toward all their servants, they will stand justly chargeable with a partiality which will not reflect honor on them ; and it is with pain I assure you they stand but too low already in the estimation of the world here. Our friend Mr. Jay is at Madrid with his family ; have written to him, but there has not been time to hear from him in return. He is in a private character, and I hope enjoys that consideration and respect which he merits so fully ; but the cautious and reserved conduct of those he has to attempt a negotiation with, will, I fear, prove disagreeable and disgusting. I will not say more lest I transgress the rule I have myself prescribed as to politics. I have been twice at Court, and shall go there occasionally, but on my private affairs only, in which I shall succeed as to the business of masts ; but as it is impossible to obtain

convoys, I fear little can be done at present, more than to lay the foundation of something important, or a year or two hence, as your land speculations will be turned partly up the Delaware. I wish you to interest me in any of them where the timber is to be had, in pursuing the plan which I proposed in my postscript of the 15th of April. The lands we may reserve to ourselves may be those covered with this timber, and that to the satisfaction of those who purchase of us the residue ; for the object of the purchasers will be fixed on lands easily subdued, and capable of an early profit, whilst we shall look to the future, as well as the present. Among other bold measures of Mr. Necker, our great financier, he has dissolved the Farmers General. I am not well informed what system he will adopt in their place, but probably such as will save us much expence and imposition in our commerce in tobacco and other articles in the same predicament. This man, though a foreigner and protestant, is become absolute in the finance department, which is the same as being entirely and universally so ; since he who commands the purse has every thing in his power at court. His furnishing money to equip the most formidable fleet France has owned since the beginning of this century, and to support the war without any new tax or burthen laid on the Kingdom, is at once a striking proof of his ability, and of the dissipation of his predecessors in office. This renders him dear to the nation ; but as this immense sum is saved out of what was formerly dissipated by the dependants, agents, and servants of the court, he must be feared and hated, rather than loved by them, but he is become so necessary that he is secure. He has dismissed lately, at one stroke, upwards of four hundred household servants and officers of the King, by which at least two hundred thousand pounds sterling annual expence will be saved. By this you will form some idea of the enormous and unnecessary expences of royalty, and what abuses and embezzlements had in the course of time crept in and been

practised, as well as of the courage of the man who has dared to make such a reform in what his predecessors, even the most patriotic of them, never dared even to examine, and in which the greater part of them probably shared. I have only to wish that this great man loved America better than I think he does; but I am insensibly verging towards politics. I will therefore inclose you the Gazette, which our friend Holker will explain to you. My compliments to Mrs. Morris, and accept my constant wishes for your mutual happiness. I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

I lodge with our venerable friend Doctor Franklin, who seems to grow younger every day, and who remembers and highly esteems you, though he seldom writes to any one, except on special business.

Robert Morris, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN JAY.

Paris, Sept. 4th, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you the 28th ulto., by the courier from Versailles, and enclosed a letter for the Spanish Minister, with a proposed contract, approved of and witnessed by our late friend Don Juan [Miralles], that I doubt not will arrive before this; and though it is not time, as yet, for me to expect a letter from you, I am very solicitous to have that matter brought to an issue as soon as possible, and therefore pray your kind attention to procure me one as early as may be, that I may take the measures necessary with my friends on the subject. We have nothing new here worth sending to you; the late capture has given much pleasure to us, but you had it long before. I may, however, be permitted to congratulate you on it, as I think the consequences will

be greater than the event in itself, however considerable. I pray to be remembered most respectfully to Mrs. Jay and Col. Livingston, and be assured I am, with the most sincere attachment and esteem, my Dear Sir, yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

I have a letter from Mr. Robert Morris, of the 3d of July, you may have later, but I cannot omit saying that all friends were then well.

His Excellency John Jay, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Sept. 4th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you the 23d and inclosed letters and accounts; but having received no answer, I am apprehensive of some accident, knowing you to be punctual in correspondence, as well as in other matters. Pray, if you have not done it already, write me by return of this post on that subject. The box and other articles of baggage are still behind. Mr. Richmond informs me of having received them and sent them on to your care. I must pray you to enquire into the reason of their detention. La Farque tells me his wife had sent on letters to him, just before his arrival, directed to Nicholas La Farque in Philadelphia; that the letters were sent to Nantes, per post; they may possibly still lye in the office, and as they contain some protested bills of exchange, I must pray you to enquire if they still remain there, and if so, to have them returned to my care. I wish also to know in what time you expect to send off your stores for America, and if I can obtain the freight of a few tons of goods at the rate we talked of, or nearly at that price. What I may want will be at most a meer trifle of five or six tons. I pray you to present my

compliments to Mrs. Williams and Miss Alexander,  
and to accept of my best wishes for your prosperity.

I am, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,  
S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Williams,  
Nantes.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN SHEE.

Paris, Sept. 4th, 1780.

SIR,—I received yours of the 23d of June last a few days since, and am sorry to inform you that Loan Office Certificates are in no demand in France, at any rate. I wrote Mr. Nesbit on the subject, who informed he could do nothing with them at L'Orient until some change take place. They must remain unsold; but if any opportunity offer me a possibility of complying with your orders respecting them, they shall be complied with. I have a prospect of doing something with the shares of the Illinois and Wabash lands, but I fear your limits are rather higher than they will go at. The company limited theirs much lower, but I have not as yet offered them. At any rate, choosing rather to find how the mind of persons likely to adventure stood effected towards such a speculation, I shall from time to time acquaint you, through our mutual friends Messrs. Morris and Wilson, of my proceeding in this affair. I have, in the meantime, the honor to be, Sir,

Yours, &c.,  
S. DEANE.

Mr. John Shee.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. FAIRHOLM AND LUTHER.

Paris, Sept. 4th, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,—I received yours of the 10th ulto. but a few days since; its being directed to me at

Nantes delayed its passage. I thank you for your kind offers of service, and you may be assured that I shall, as I did when in America, recommend your house to my countrymen. But little can be expected from thence in your way during the war. On a peace it will be considerable, and, I doubt not, you will have a principal share.

I am, Gentlemen, most sincerely,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

My compliments to Capt. Conklin, if not already sailed; and if he should be delayed any time, I must pray to be informed, that I may send a letter by him.

Messrs. Fairholm & Luther.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC MOSES.

Paris, Sept. 7th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—In addition to what I have already written you, observe the following for your direction: [Cipher translated] The credit of France and Spain is low in Europe. As to money, Spain obtained a credit of the merchants last year of 800,000 Livres, which was to be done by charging an interest bill until the end of the war. The bills passed until a few days since, when the merchants proposed to protest them. Several have been returned. This has affected the merchants in Europe, and it is hourly expected that many of them will fail. This must be attended with great loss and bad consequences; for, in a word, Spain has neither money nor credit, and is as likely to become bankrupt as Congress. This will surprise you, and will not be believed in America, but it is true. The French are exerting themselves to have the bills of Spain protected, and its credit restored. Possibly they may succeed, but credit lost is not easily

regained, and the loss will ruin many. This, with other circumstances, renders our public concerns very critical ; and for our private ones, let me advise you to be careful how you take any note on Europe, at any rate. Communicate this to Myers in course. I dare not write to him, having no cypher, but he may be put on his guard. Tell him I must depend on remitting on his part. The price of French funds has fallen on this event.

Mr. Myers left Amsterdam sometime since, as I learn from Messrs. Fitzeau, Grand & Co., who have written to me, but say nothing about the remittance of the schooners first cargo to St. Eustatia, which you told was sent on, one third to my order. I am uneasy about it, as the want of it will disappoint me considerably. Pray inform me how the last voyage turned out, and send a state of it by several conveyances. Use discretion in the above. I remain

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

To Isaac Moses.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO FITZEAU, GRAND & CO.

Paris, Sept. 7th, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,—I received yours of the 1st, and am happy to find that I shall so soon have the pleasure of meeting Sir George Grand here, to which I shall refer what I have to propose on several subjects. I pray you to inform me, by the return of the post, if Messrs. Samuel and Moses Myers of St. Eustatia, or Mr. Isaac Moses of Philadelphia, have remitted any thing to your house for my orders ; they were to ship from St. Eustatia 100 hogsheads of tobacco to your address, the one third of which I was interested in. I have also to pray you to forward the enclosed letter. I

proposé to set out for Holland the last of this month, but shall wait a little for the arrival of Sir George Grand, as I wish to see him previously. I have the honor to be with much respect, Gentlemen,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. Fitzeau, Grand & Co.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO SAMUEL AND MOSES MYERS.

Paris, Sept. 8th, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,—You will before this be informed of my having been long detained in Virginia, by which I was so unhappy as to miss finding Mr. M. Myers in Europe on my arrival, which was about five weeks since. As you have constantly opportunities of sending to the continent, I shall take the liberty of troubling you with duplicates of the letters, which I shall write direct from hence, and pray you to give them to some person of confidence bound for Philadelphia or Virginia, with orders to destroy them in case of capture. I must also pray you to send me a copy of the schooner *Chance's* first and second voyage. You will enclose your letters to care of our mutual friends, Fitzeau & Grand at Amsterdam. The uncertainty of any conveyance direct from Philadelphia, by which our friend Mr. Moses might send me those accounts, makes me request them of you, as you know me to be one third interested. I pray also to be informed if the schooner has been sold on her return to Philadelphia the last time, or what has been her fate. I shall write you again in a few days ; meantime I am

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. Samuel & Moses Myers,  
St. Eustatia.

*Thomas Mss.*



FROM JOHN JAY.

St. Ildefonso, Sept. 8th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—If I could easily be angry with an old friend, I should be so with you. Your silence is unkind, and the more so as you might probably have communicated things useful, as well as entertaining. Before we parted in America, you gave me a cypher, and I really promised myself much from it on your arrival in Europe. I could almost wish that the winds had blown you this way. I would give a good deal for a day's conversation with you, but that is impossible. A correspondence is the only substitute, and, perhaps, you have detached yourself too much from public concerns and public men to be troubled with it. I hope this is not the case. It would be wrong to extend to a whole nation the resentments excited by a few. Perhaps other reasons may have induced your silence; whatever they may be I regret them.

Adieu. I am, dear Sir, your most obedient Servant,

JOHN JAY.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., VII. 299.*

TO MESSRS. GOURLADE AND MOYLAN.

Passy, Sept. 13th, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,—I did myself the honor of writing to you from Nantes the 8th ulto., but have not been favored with your reply. I then sent to your care two letters, one for Mr. Wilson and one for Col. Harrison, and forwarded to you a letter from Mr. Griffin. The latter required me to execute a small commission for him, in case he had funds in your hands. I shall be obliged to you for a line on the subject, and have the honor to be,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. Gourlade & Moylan.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, Sept. 13th, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have written you two letters since my arrival ; the last on the 4th instant. As I know not whither you may have preserved our cypher, I dare not be particular on subjects which you may wish to hear from me upon. Mr. Searle has arrived from Philadelphia. I have not seen him, nor has Doctor Franklin ; but I learn that he brings nothing new. He landed at Brest. Two vessels lately arrived at L'Orient which left Philadelphia late in July. They brought no public letters. I have received one from our mutual friend Mr. Morris, but nothing material had then happened. In general the spirits of the people were raised by the arrival of Monsr. Ternay and the forces, but there had not been time for any operation. The dissolution of Parliament has employed every body in electioneering in England, so that they have no time to make and send us news from thence. It is generally thought there will be very little or no change in the members ; but a new election makes a new Parliament, which, though it is composed of the old members, may pursue new measures, without the charge of inconsistency or being responsible for what was done by the old. I am persuaded some new measures will be adopted, but whither they will tend to continue or end the war is uncertain. I rather think the latter from what I can collect. I have mentioned in both my former letters the contract sent you ; if there is a probability of succeeding, and my presence will in your opinion secure its success, or be necessary, I will somehow contrive to pay you a visit, though it will be inconvenient, and almost impossible for me to do it, engaged as I am in settling former transactions. I must depend on a letter, whenever you write Doctor Franklin. My most respectful compliments wait on Mrs. Jay, and my wishes for your mutual happiness.

If Col. Livingston is with you, pray remember me to him. I am, with the most sincere esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

His Excellency Mr. Jay,  
Madrid.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN NESBITT.

Passy, Sept. 14th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours enclosing a packet from our mutual friend Mr. Morris, but it was only a copy of what he wrote me on the 3d of July. I must therefore pray you to inform if you have any news from America by those vessels, also what time it is expected that Capt. Jones will sail, and if the vessels arrived may be expected to be dispatched soon, if freight can be had, and at what rate. I am

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Nesbitt,  
L'Orient.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, Sept. 14th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Your favors of the 7th is before me. I will examine the account which, I doubt not, is right. Meantime I am very solicitous about a box ordered to your care from Rochelle of which you have the key, if it is not already arrived. I must pray you to write a line to Mr. Richmond, of Rochelle, in whose care the box was left. I have in it some papers and books which I greatly want. The vessel arrived at Brest, brought a Mr. Searle, another American agent. We

have not quite thirteen as yet in Europe, though nearly that number. Let me see, W. Lee, Austin, Mazzei, Smith, Pennet, Searle, Gillan, besides others that I do not recollect, all soliciting to borrow money and get a credit for goods. Mr. Searle has not been here, though he brought letters for Doctor Franklin, nor do I suppose we shall see him at all, unless by accident; but by papers to the 5th July, I see that Congress have put the finishing hand to their resolutions of the 16th March, and have rendered it, as far as in their power, impossible that their money should ever rise in value above forty for one. I need make no reflection on this. You know my sentiments on such kind of conduct; theirs is unparalleled in the history of man. By Nantes I have letters to 23d July from Philadelphia; nothing done at that date. If you receive any news, pray inform me of it, for I am very anxious for the fate of this campaign, in which I fear nothing will be done; and to act merely on the defensive after the junction of the French troops, will be as bad or worse to us than a defeat without them. My compliments to the Ladies. I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

J. Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, Sept. 18th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 8th this evening, and this being my fourth letter to you since my arrival, you must be convinced that your suspicions of neglect on my part are groundless, nor is it possible for me to be so taken up with any affairs, or so resentful for any treatment I have met with, as to be unmindful of the public affairs of our country or forgetful of my friends, whither in public employ or not. As I passed the whole of last winter and spring in Virginia, and left

the continent early in June, I could not bring any important accounts of public transactions which had not long before my arrival been published in Europe, and not certain of my cypher being in your hands, I could not venture to hazard my private sentiments in a letter liable to miscarry or be examined on the way. Mr. Searle arrived here a few days since; he left Philadelphia the 15th, and I have seen papers to the 25th of July. Nothing of consequence since the taking of Charleston had happened. Monsr. Ternay and the French forces arrived the 12th, at Rhode Island. Admiral Graves joined Admiral Arbuthnot about the same time, which gives the enemy a superiority at sea, from which circumstance nothing decisive can be expected this season, except Count Guichen go to the northward, which from the near equality of the fleets in the West Indies cannot be expected. Mr. Laurens was about to sail for Holland when Mr. Searle left Philadelphia; Mr. Adams has been there some time. The temper of the Americans seemed to be for exertions to the utmost this season, and their spirits were raised by the assistance sent out; but an inferiority at sea is an unfortunate circumstance, and may prevent the happy effects otherway to be hoped for. [Cipher translated.] But our greater misfortune is our credit is lost in Europe, in France in particular, and since the resolution of Congress of the 18th of March last, it is almost as great a disgrace to be known to be an American as it was two years since an honor. Were I not an eye witness of the case, it would be absolutely incredible. Fraudulent, bankrupt, and the like characters we are now stigmatized with, and passages from the circular letter of Congress of September last are thrown out against us on all sides, and in all companies. What can we say? Laurens is coming over to obtain a loan, whilst Mass., Pennsylvania, and Virginia have Ambassadors in France for the same purpose, who are foolishly making a parade and bidding on each other. More ambassadors from separate

states are on their way, whilst all of them have not unitedly any credit left. What can this effect but to prove our poverty and distress more fully to all Europe? Adams went from France disgusted, and left the court and people equally so with him. He doubtless means well, but his character in France is that of being a greater madman than Lee; indeed, what greater folly can any one be guilty of than to boast and threaten where he ought to sooth and conciliate? And is it not the height of madness to do rudeness to our friends, and in the hour of our distress. If is true the scheme of France is a ruinous one to America. They are spinning out the war and making it a war of feint against England rather than of bold, determined action; but the resources of England are so much greater than what previously France imagined, that the length of time it will take to defeat them in this way must ruin us, and I fear the indecision of this behavior will do us more injury than if no force had been sent out to America. Every ineffectual encouragement operates in a reverse ratio. This briefly is my opinion on the subject: Lee's informants will not fail to represent it in a worse light in America. They will and do declare that the sending out troops is an artful and insidious scheme to continue the war, and not a design to end it. From the temper in which America was, especially the southern States, when I left them, I fear the consequences. You are by this time tired; if not, I am. And therefore with respects to Mrs. Jay, and best wishes for your mutual happiness, I am most sincerely, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

His Excellency John Jay, Esqr.

P. S.—I greatly wish to see you, but the settling the Commissioners accounts must take up some time here. You know that the only objections against me in America were on the score of those accounts having

been left unsettled; yet Mr. Adams returned to America without settling even his private accounts, tho' he had not any other business, nor did any thing else in Europe but spend money and keep the accounts. No fault was found with him, but he was honorably reappointed. Mr. Lee, who remained in France more than a year after his recall, has not settled either his public or his private accounts. Mr. Izard, Mr. William Lee are in the same predicament. These men have, each of them, as appears by the accounts, received more than twice the amount of public monies which I ever received, and have literally done worse than nothing. But it is a subject which I will trust myself no farther on at present; such ingratitude and injustice are enough to make a stoic feel. There have been causes for all this, and agents employed, not as yet publicly known, and more than one of the latter on the list of my pretended friends. I suspected this before I left America; since my return I have demonstration of it. May you, my worthy friend, be so happy as never to experience how painful and how cutting it is to be treated with public ingratitude, edged and drove on by the treachery of those in whom you have confided. You merit a better fate, but that will not secure you without that prudence of which you happily have so great a portion, and of which I have had so little. Nothing can induce me to take a journey into Spain, except the desire of seeing and conversing with you, or affairs of commerce in which I must engage to repair my losses in the public service. But American commerce is at this time in as low a point of reputation as our public credit, nor do I find one person out of the many formerly so desirous to adventure who would send a shilling that way sooner than to throw it into the sea. In short, France rings with complaints of the heavy losses of Merchants by the depreciation in America, many of whom put large sums in the Loan Office when money was only four for one, and though by the last resolutions Congress have promised to pay

off those certificates at the rate at which money stood at the time of their respective dates, yet when the Circular Letter of last September is compared with the resolutions of March 18th and subsequent ones, fixing the depreciation at forty for one, and in effect absolutely preventing any appreciation from that on the paper current, they draw consequences the most unfavorable (possibly unjust ones), and say, if Congress can by those arts annihilate thirty nine fortieths of their notes, nothing prevents their extinguishing a still greater proportion of the residue, or even the whole. It is to no purpose to reason from future probabilities against facts, with men who suffer by those facts, and that materially, for the present, at least. In short, however well intended those resolutions might have been, they have given a wound to our credit as a people, as well as to individuals, which cannot be easily healed. You know the state of politics when you left America. They are, I believe, much the same at this moment; but my long residence in Virginia gave me the means of knowing many things which are not, I believe, generally understood, and which I wish to communicate to you; but this requires a personal interview. I shall go for Holland next month, and soon after my return, to Bordeaux. This will almost divide the distance between us, and, if possible, I will divide the other half rather than miss of seeing you; but of this in some future letter. Meantime I pray let not my letters depreciate like our paper. In regards to yours, this is four for one, and each four times as long, which makes sixteen for one, if I calculate right. I am willing to allow you a considerable discount, but so much will sink me too low in my own opinion. In short, let me have your letters often, and in some proportion to the length of mine. Once more,

Adieu.

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jay.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, Sept. 19th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Inclosed I send you a protested bill of exchange drawn by a Monsr. Simonot, late a Captain in America. I am assured he is now at Nantes, and pray you to take necessary steps for the immediate recovery or security of the money. The man deserves no favor, having drawn the bill on a person neither to be found or heard of. Mr. Simonot is a person of good appearance, and was about four weeks since at Nantes, to appearance settled there for some time. Pray can you inform me of my box, &c., sent by the stage with other things. I am both surprized and alarmed at its detention. It contains among other things, some papers and books which I am in great want of, and have written to you already on the subject. The box was with Monsr. Richmond at Rochelle four or five weeks since. I must pray you to make enquiry and forward it on. Nothing new with us, but I am, as ever, my Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, Sept. 26th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 19th last evening; am very uneasy about the box, but hope that Mr. Richmond has before this sent it on. I have papers in it, and therefore pray you, if not done by Mr. Richmond, to get it sealed, that it may meet with no further obstacles. As to the paper money, I am of your opinion that the present policy of America is exerted to prevent its ever rising above forty for one, rather than pay it off honorably. It may come to that price

for a time, but what security is there that it will not again go down from that to sixty, eighty, or one hundred? The only way to retrieve the credit of paper is by an honest payment of a part of it. Promises without this are lighter than air, and proper only to help to furnish the limbs of vanity. I have not resolved as to freight; the moment I shall, I will write you, which will be in season. My compliments to Mrs. Williams and Miss Alexander. I supped last evening with their father and Uncle, who I suppose write them by the return of your servant. I am with sincere respect,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SAMUEL AND MOSES MYERS.

Passy, near Paris, Sept. 27th, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,—The schooner *Chance* in her first voyage was owned by Mr. Morris, Mr. Moses, and myself jointly. Mr. Moses did the business, and ordered her to your address, by our consent; and, as he told us, directed the schooner to be loaded back with salt, and the tobacco to be shipped for Amsterdam, the net proceeds to be paid to Messrs. Fitzeau & Grand, one third of which to remain for our separate orders. On the return of the schooner, he told us that his orders had been complied with, and that we might draw for the amount of our separate interest in that cargo, your disbursements on the schooner first deducted. On the second voyage of the schooner, he informed us that he had given conditional orders to ship the tobacco to Holland, or return the effects on board her to America, as circumstances might direct. The schooner not having returned when I left America, I knew not which you preferred; but to my

surprize and disappointment, I find that nothing has been lodged with Messrs. Fitzeau & Grand on my account. I remitted you in March, 1779, bills drawn by Mr. Holker to the amount of 23,857 livres, which, with a bill of my own, were to be vested in a voyage then meditated by Mr. Holker, Mr. Moses, and myself, with orders to remit the said bills to Messrs. Fitzeau & Co. for my use, in case the voyage did not take place. I find those bills were honored and paid to your order, without any reference to me; this gives me additional disappointment and uneasiness, from which I pray you would relieve me by sending me an account of the two voyages of the schooner, and when I am to receive the effects of those bills. The esteem I have ever had for you, I have always shewn on every occasion which presented me for serving your house, and I am confident you will not let me suffer in this affair any further. My disappointment, and the damage I must receive thereby in the measures I had planned, must be very considerable at any rate. I pray you to send duplicates of your letters to prevent miscarriage. I am with respect, Gentlemen,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. S. & M. Myers.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO WILLIAM DUER.

Passy, Sept. 28th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—The bills you sent Mr. Chaumont to replace the money you drew on him for, in favor of La Farque, have been all of them protested. Mr. Chaumont was much dissatisfied on the subject, and I have promised him he shall be made good, and that I will pay him the money, with damages and interest, which amounts to upwards of sixty pounds sterling; and, confident that you will not let me suffer for having

addressed this affair at your desire to him, I must rely on your paying my brother, Mr. Simeon Deane, in whose favor I have drawn sixty pounds sterling on account. As there is but one sett of the bills, I dare not send back the originals, but you shall have copies, and of the protests. Mr. Gerard is just returned to Versailles. I have not yet seen him. The mast contract may be relied on, but as no convoys can be obtained, it will be to no purpose to expend more money on the subject until the peace, when we may go on a certainty. I have nothing new to send you, but am, with sincere Friendship, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Col. Duer.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC MOSES.

Passy, near Paris, Sept. 28th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I have written many letters to you since my arrival, by which you will find the situation of our public, as well as private, credit here. The latter is not, however, quite so bad as the former. The Loan Office Certificates I can do nothing with, and the enclosed copy will shew you that I have no funds to execute the plan we agreed on. I am informed Mr. Myers did well at Amsterdam, and so much so that he went no farther. Consider my situation and you will do me justice. I doubt not you are disposed to do it, at any rate; but the disappointment I have met with, I know not how, calls immediately on you for it. Without funds from you, and deprived of those I relied on as sure, how can I fulfil any part of the plan proposed? Besides, consider, I pray you, the disappointment and uneasiness this has given me. I can do nothing, but under new engagements in my present situation, except for the three hundred pounds

sterling of which I can really make no kind of use for whatever you may dream of in America. It would be the highest affront here to offer the security of Congress for any thing. Times may change, but until they do, no man who has any credit would presume to offer Loan Office Certificates in payment for any thing. I have no time to add by this conveyance, which presents itself suddenly, but to pray you to send me a state of our accounts, which I desire solely on account of the schooner Chance, which has, though successful, disappointed me. My compliments to Mrs. Moses. I shall execute her orders, and send on by the first sure conveyance. I shall compleat the mast contract and some other things which I hope will be of importance, at least in a peace, which I pray may soon arrive.

I am, with much respect, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S.—I pray you give my brother Simeon Deane a duplicate of the account you send me. As Messrs. Samuel & M. Myers ordered out goods to the amount of 23,857 livres, equal to £1,043. 14. 10. sterling, from Amsterdam, with the bills belonging to me, you will be pleased to send me the accounts of the sales of those goods, and to remit me the amount in good bills, the avails of the schooner's two voyages, which, as she went safe, must be considerable; this, I pray you also, to remit me. Her first cargo, you remember you told me, was shipped to Amsterdam on our joint account, the avails of which could not have been short of one thousand pounds sterling; and, as your house has had the sole benefit thereof, I presume you will account to me for the profits on that concern, which, remitted me, will enable me to execute the plan proposed in a most extensive manner. Though I can do nothing with the Loan Office Certificates, yet I shall ship about

six hundred pounds sterling this fall in such goods as we talked of. But I cannot go on without the above remittances and funds from you for your part. As the goods I shall send out, shall advise you in season, but I must again tell you I rely on your settling and remitting me the above as soon as possible.

Yours,

S. D.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO SIMEON DEANE.

Passy, Sept. 29th, 1780.

DEAR BROTHER,—By the enclosed letter to Mr. Moses, including copy of what I have written to Messrs. S. & M. Myers at St. Eustatia, you will see how cruelly I have been disappointed by these gentlemen. On my leaving America, there was a ballance due Isaac Moses of about twelve thousand pounds, as I ordered my brother to remit him, and left some articles in his hands for sale. I trust the ballance on the whole was not more than seven or eight thousand pounds, which at the discount at the time of advancing will be somewhere about 200 or 250 pounds Pennsylvania currency. On his part he and his house have received the proceeds of the one third of two cargoes of tobacco in St. Eustatia, amounting to more than sixty hogsheads for my share, out of which nothing is to be deducted but a cargo of salt, and disbursements on the schooner the first voyage in St. Eustatia; the second cargo and out fitts having been all paid for by the cargo of salt, except a ballance charged me in the account, I referred to. Besides this they ordered out from Amsterdam 23,857 livres, or £1,043. 14. 10. sterling in goods, instead of applying the money to replace so much for me with Mr. Gand at Paris. This they did by authority of a general permission

that if the sugar voyage did not take effect, and a favorable opportunity presented for improving the money, to do it for my advantage ; though I afterwards directed the contrary, and never imagined this to be the case until I arrived. By this you will see that Mr. Moses and his house must have at this time near three thousand pounds sterling to account for to me. I pray you, therefore, to make the settlement of the account a serious matter, and as soon as possible transmit me the state of it. I received of Mr. Moses forty thousand dollars in Loan Office Certificates, for which I am debtor three hundred pounds sterling by agreement, and for which I shall ship him goods to that amount this fall on his account and risque. I shall ship out in the course of this fall about £1,500 sterling to you, of which shall seasonably advise you ; they will be goods for the next summer season, and for which I shall order immediate remittances to be made to amount of the first cost. I have urged Mr. Moses to make me immediate remittances, and I pray you to do the same, if to be done without loss, as with three or four thousand pounds sterling I could do something very clever, and to our mutual advantage. I have written to you on the subject of lands near Norfolk and in the Dismal Swamp. I am anxious to know how you succeed, and whither shares in that patent are to be purchased reasonably ; if they are, interest me, but take care that the title is indisputable. I have written to Coln. Duer to pay you sixty pounds sterling ; this and whatever you may receive of Mr. Wharton apply in this way, and as much farther as you shall judge safe, constantly advising me of your proceedings. I shall go for Holland in about ten days, from whence I will write you again ; meantime I am most affectionately, Dear Brother,

Yours,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Simeon Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

To J. MOYLAN.

Paris, Sept. 30th, 1780.

SIR,—This is my fourth letter to you since my arrival, the three first not having been honored with any answer. I should not trouble you again were it not on account of Col. Griffin, whose orders I wish to execute, and to know if the letter sent you from Nantes, inclosed for Mr. Wilson and Mr. Harrison, came to hand, and were delivered to Capt. Jones. Though surprized at the neglect my letters have met with from you, yet being conscious of not having merited it, but the reverse, I am not distressed on that subject; but I presume whatever your sentiments may otherways be, you will not refuse me the information I request on the above, as I assure you I have not the least disposition to continue a correspondence that appears to be disagreeable to you.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Moylan.

*Thomas Mss.*

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To JONATHAN NESBITT.

Passy, Oct. 9th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I am informed that a ship is arrived at L'Orient, which left Philadelphia the first of Sept. I have not received any letters, therefore pray you to inform me if she has brought any thing new, and that you would inquire and acquaint me if Mr. Laurens had sailed for Holland before the first of Sept.; also what was the rate of exchange between Continental paper and specie, between that and bills on Europe, how the new money supported its credit in Pensylvania and elsewhere. You mentioned to me in your last that you should dispatch three swift sailing vessells this month; pray how soon will they sail, and have you still room for freight? When did Capt. Jones sail?



You will much oblige me by satisfying me in the above, and equally so by giving me an opportunity of doing you a like kind office. In the mean time, I am, with much esteem,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Nesbitt.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, Octr. 9th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I am still without receiving any account of my box, long since arrived at Rochelle. I am really surprized, as there has been so much time elapsed without having any news about it, and exceedingly impatient, as I have some papers in it of consequence to me and to nobody else; pray oblige me so far as to make effectual enquiry after it, and let me know when you dispatch your ship with public stores. I pray you present my compliments to Mrs. Williams and Miss Alexander and to Capt. Green; pray, when does he sail? I am, with sincere esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, Octo. 9th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—This is my fifth letter since my arrival, and having received no acknowledgement from you of the receipt of any one of them, I am a little uneasy for the fate of them; in particular for that which inclosed a letter from Don Juan to the Minister. My last was of the 18th ulto., in which I wrote you my sentiments on political affairs; nothing new has since occurred to induce a change. Letters are received at

L'Orient as late as the 3d of last month, when every thing remained in status quo. A good understanding prevailed between the American and French troops; the latter are entrenched at Rhode Island. Admiral Arbuthnot was off the harbour with a superior fleet, and Clinton threatened an embarkation of ten thousand troops at New York to attack them. The New England militia were called in to their aid. The Northern privateers had captured and brought into Boston nineteen ships of the Quebec fleet, valued at four hundred thousand pounds sterling; they could not indeed have been worth much less. This, every thing considered, is of more consequence than the capture off Cape Finisterre. From the West Indies nothing new. The British Parliament meet the last of this month, and, it is said, will be entertain'd with a pacific speech from the Throne; indeed, from all I can learn, it is probable that some overtures will be made which I wish may lead to an honorable peace, but I dare not make any dependence on it, though I think there is a greater prospect of it at present than for some time past. Mr. Searle sets off for Holland tomorrow, where Mr. Adams has fixed himself and family. No news of Mr. Laurens, whence Mr. Searle sets him down as lost. I believe we are so much of the christian and philosopher as to be resigned on the occasion; his arrival can do no good at this time, for there is no money to be borrowed in Holland nor any where else on our account, and, if there was, we have so many agents of private states bidding on one another, and proclaiming thereby our wants as well as our folly, that no prudent man would venture his money. Pray let me know your true situation and prospects in Spain; I wish to know them from the interest I take in whatever affects you, as well as on account of our country.

[Cipher translated.] In short, I do not approve of the conduct of France or Spain to America. Spain evidently trifles with us in the face of all Europe. France does much the same, but labors to save appear-

ances. Our cause has lost ground greatly in France. Europe is more and more indifferent about us. The Armed Neutrality is at an end, or rather will never take place. Our liberty and independancy is an object which becomes every day more out of sight. America begins to grow uneasy, and this fruitless campaign, with other circumstances, will, I fear, totally crush us; every American goes from France in disgust, though I think without cause. The language held by Adams, our minister for Peace, and his retiring to Holland in disgust, has had more serious effects than is suspected by most; in short, all these circumstances laid together, I fear, if a Peace or truce take place, the first object of the war on our part will have but little weight with our friends, especially with Spain, who I am convinced is very far from wishing us to succeed farther than to aid her resentment against England. You can, doubtless, set me right on this subject, but if you do not think it prudent to do so, I will not blame you. My best compliments wait on Mrs. Jay and Coln. Livingston, and am, with sincere Friendship, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jay,  
Madrid.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JAMES WILSON.

Passy, Oct. 9th, 1780.

[See appendix.]

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TO GEORGE MERCER.

Paris, Octo. 13th, 1780.

SIR,—Yours of the 8th, I received last evening. I had the pleasure of being acquainted with two of your

brothers at Philadelphia, one of them [James] then a member of Congress, and the other [John Francis] an aid-de-camp to General Lee, and afterwards at Williamsburg, where the latter spent last winter, and the former some days on business. We lodged in the same house, and being told that I was about to come to France, he proposed writing to you; but uncertain when I should sail, or where a letter might find you, he prayed me to inform you that, in the late disposition of lands in Virginia, he had secured for you the whole of your shares as an officer in the late war, that he had also made some purchases in those lands in which he had interested you, and that he had taken measures to have them advantageously located. This was his business at Williamsburg, where he mentioned many other anecdotes which he wished me to communicate to you; but supposing he would write you, or give me a memorandum, they have slipped my memory. The above is the substance, however, of what he desired me to tell you, and desirous of executing your brothers orders, I enquired of Mr. Petrie immediately on my arrival where you resided, and mentioned to him generally my having seen your brother, and my having a message from him for you. I should be happy to see you, and to give you any farther information in my power, and though by your enquiries personally, I might recollect circumstances which you may be interested in, yet as the above is the essential part, you will judge of the necessity of making the journey. I expect to be in Holland in about three weeks from this time, and if you think it proper, can give me a meeting somewhere on my rout, or at Amsterdam; of this you will have sufficient time to advise me. I have the honor to be, with much respect, Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Coln. Mercer.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN JAY.\*

Paris, Oct. 16th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 2d, I received last evening. Am much surprized at the miscarriage of my letter of the 28th of August, nor can I account, for it actually went under cover by the courier from Court. The contents were not secret, though important to me, and containing a letter of Don Juan [Miralles] to the Minister of Madrid. Its loss cannot be repaired. I trust you will yet receive it. Captain Harding arrived before I left Virginia, but I left Philadelphia soon after you. My letters in future will come under cover, as you advise. Doctor Bancroft can best account for his not answering Mr. Carmichael's letters, though, from what the Doctor has told me, I am surprized that the latter should be at any loss at all on the subject. I do not well understand your proposed addition of cypher, and therefore must write in my former method until you explain it more fully. I have now replied to yours, and, having made out a letter as long and as circumstantial as yours, might subscribe myself yours, etc., but I cannot do it without telling you that I feel myself a little piqued at the shortness of your letter in reply to two long ones of mine. I am equally desirous, with you, of knowing many little things and some great circumstances which, as your friend and countryman, I am interested in. The affair of Mr. Laurens you are acquainted with, by the public papers, for which it is a fruitful and seasonable subject, as that of electioneering is exhausted in England. His son sailed ten days before him for Europe, but has not been heard of.

Our forces in Carolina—under Gates—have been defeated. Our loss is in Baron de Kalb killed, and about 2,500 killed and prisoners. The account is, I hope, exaggerated. Adams is in Holland, and has

\*Translated from the cypher.

power to supply the place of Laurens. Mr. Searle is in Holland. You have the general American news as early, probably, as we have in France; but as I see almost every week some one from thence, I must tell you that our affairs are not in a better state than when you left Philadelphia. Many intrigues are on foot in France and in Madrid as in America, and I know so much of them as to caution you not to be amazed at anything. A result may happen in three months, at present not suspected on either side. Being but a passenger, I have leasure for observation, and from my past experience, and former as well as present connections, am able to see as much of the game as some who play the great hands. My best wishes are for the Peace, *Safety*, and *Liberty* of America. This was our early prayer, as you must remember. Lee was at Philadelphia, publishing a new edition of *Common Sense*, with additions, etc. Nothing that he can say, or Congress resolve, can alter facts; and having received so much injustice and ingratitude from, and seen so much practiced by, Congress on others, I am become indifferent, in some degree, to what either of them can say or do. I know the weakness of Congress, to say no worse of it, and the malignity of Lee and associates. But the situation of America wrings my very soul. Ruined, on the one part, by weak, distracted councils, and betrayed, on the others, by those in whom it was confided. It is too hard. But adieu to politics. I promise to meddle no more with them in our future correspondence, but to follow the example you have set me in your letters, and write only on indifferent subjects. Your happiness and prosperity can never be of this kind with me; and from that motive, I wish to know, at least, the outlines of our situation. But perhaps you think me gloomy, if not disaffected. I can never be so to the interest of America—and America will soon be sensible of it—but I am not cheerful, except when I am in the company of my friends, and find them happy or hear that they are so.

and when I cease reflecting on certain subjects, this is sometimes the case. I hope it will soon be entirely so. My compliments to Mrs. Jay and Col. Livingstone, and am on all occasions, my dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend, and very humble servant,  
S. DEANE.

The Hon. John Jay, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, Octo. 24th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours, informing me that the box and bedding were sent on, or about to be. I have sent repeatedly to the messagerie, but can hear nothing of them, though the time is elapsed you fixed for their arrival; as these trifles have unfortunately been very troublesome, I have now only to pray you to enquire if they are actually gone, and inform me by what conveyance, that I may know how to come at them. Is the ship from Bordeaux which is to receive the cloathing arrived, and when will they probably be shipped? Doctor Franklin has the gout very severely, and I fear it will stick by him sometime. Things are in some disorder in our neighborhood, though I hope they will turn out better than what will probably be reported to you, and it is by some propagated here. America is so unfortunate as not only to have Britain for her enemy, but most of her subjects who come abroad become enemies to one another; except Doctor Franklin's family, yourself, Doctor Bancroft, and myself, with one or two more, I hardly know of any that have harmonized or agreed well. I flatter myself ours will not be interrupted or broken. Lee and Izard were at Philadelphia, where they were exerting themselves with a junto, both in public and private, to injure Doctor Franklin; fortunately for me, being out of place, I am not of any consequence, but I can but hint to you that the delay of the cloathing promised

by the Marquis La Fayette in March last, to come out with Mr. Ternay's fleet, will be improved to the worst of purposes; and our army suffering for want, will not attend to real facts, if, indeed, they can know them, but reason only from what they feel. You are as much in the way of news from America as I am; but from the whole I can learn, there is a very serious winter scene preparing for Virginia and the Southern States. A large force is certainly about to sail from England, and Clinton, relying on his superiority at sea, was preparing for an expedition into Chesapeake Bay. I will not add to this information, on which you may rely, on any reflections of mine, but am, with compliments to the ladies and Capt. Green and Capt. Robeson, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Williams,  
Nantes.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. ISAAC ALL.

Passy, Octo. 24th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 16th, but this day. I thank you for your kind congratulations on my safe arrival, and return you the same most sincerely. I should be happy to have a concern in a vessel under your command, but am at present too much engaged in old affairs to undertake new ones. As you left Philadelphia so lately, I wish you would inform me with precision of the following facts: the value of Continental paper in specie, the rate of bills of exchange purchased with it, the state of the new paper, and the price of flour, of tobacco, rum, and sugar in the new paper, or of other articles by which I may obtain the real state of its value. You will much oblige me by your information in the above. The letter you refer to I did not receive, or should have



answered it, being at all times desirous of your acquaintance and rejoic'd to hear of your welfare. I am, with much esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Capt. All.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM JOHN JAY.

Madrid, October 26th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—At length your first letter, contrary to my expectations, has arrived, and my attention to it shall not be wanting. I have also received your favour of the 18th, September; since which more of my letters than one have, I hope, reached you, this being the fourth.

I have read, considered, and reconsidered the facts and reflections you communicate, and am persuaded that the consequences you draw, though in a certain degree just, are not quite so extensive as you seem to suppose. I am not free from similar apprehensions, but they are not so strong as yours. But however well founded they may be, they ought only to increase our prudence. If I had leisure, it would give me pleasure to go largely into this subject; at present I cannot, because matters of more immediate importance engage me.

That you have been hardly treated I know, and shall never hesitate to say; but I cannot think the cases of the gentlemen are similar, or prove the points to which you apply them. You was blamed, not for omitting finally to settle your accounts in France, but for not being in *capacity* to show (when in America) what those accounts were; and I don't know that those gentlemen were or will be chargeable with the like incapacity. I mention this only to show the distinction between the cases.

How far the distinction is important, or how far that incapacity could justify the treatment it occa-

sioned, are other questions. For my own part, I think it could not justify it. It will also remain a question how far your measures were prudent. I think some of them were, and some not; but this inquiry 'requires many considerations and combinations and circumstances which I must defer for the present. The discoveries you allude to respecting secret practices surprise me exceedingly. I have no such suspicions; perhaps you may give more weight to circumstances than they may merit. The inquiry nevertheless is very important, and while any doubts remain, the pursuit should be continued. Justice demands that we should not, even in our opinions, injure men who may be innocent; and prudence also demands that we permit not a good heart to impose on a good head, a case by no means uncommon.

I wish there were twenty other motives than those you mention for your passing to Spain, exclusive of the satisfaction it will give me to see you. The matters you mention are highly interesting in a public and a private view. They cannot be so well handled in letters as conversation. Whether it will be in my power to meet you I cannot predict, and therefore I cannot promise. It would be agreeable, but I have hitherto found so many matters not to be neglected, constantly demanding my attention, that I cannot flatter myself with being more disengaged till the greater objects of my coming here shall be either attained or become unattainable. If I should nevertheless be able, I will; if not, I hope you will come on.

The attachment you express for your country, notwithstanding your complaints of her ingratitude, does you much honour. The injustice of resenting on a whole people the mistakes or transgressions of a few is obvious; but there are comparatively not many who, under similar circumstances, either think right or act so. Truth is seldom so immersed in darkness as not to be capable of being brought to light, if attempted in season; and as the mass of the people mean well, they will finally

do justice, though their mistakes and passions sometimes delay it. Persevere, therefore, do good to your country, and evince the rectitude of your conduct while in her service. I believe you honest, and I think you injured. The considerations will always prompt me to every friendly office in my power to render. I must again advise you to collect, review, and ascertain precisely the evidence you may have or can obtain of the duplicity of the persons you allude to, whoever they may be. I see this business in many important lights, and the time may come when you may rejoice in all the trouble you may now be at about it. Nay, all this evidence, provided it should appear material, ought to be committed to paper, and not permitted to diminish or die in or with your memory; put it in the power of your friends to vindicate your reputation when you may be no more. It will be of particular importance to your son, to whom you cannot leave a better inheritance than a good, nor a worse one than a bad or doubtful reputation. Remember, too, that time is spending, men forgetting or dying, papers wasting, etc., and therefore the sooner you reduce these matters to a certainty the better.

Mrs. Jay and the Colonel desire to be particularly remembered to you. This will go under cover to Dr. Franklin. Be pleased to assure him of my regard and esteem, of which, also, believe you have no little share.

I am, Dear Sir, very sincerely,

Yours, &c.,

JOHN JAY.

Silas Deane, Esq.

*Johnston's Correspondence of Jay, I. 455.*

JOHN JAY TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Madrid, Nov. 5th, 1780.

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I KNOW but little of what passes among you, and shall be obliged to you for such traits of public and private

matters as you may think interesting. I have had some letters from Deane; he is much displeased with what he thinks the duplicity of certain persons, who in particular I don't know. He is endeavouring to establish here a bargain with Mirales about the masts, and talks of coming here. How did you and he part?

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Your friend,

JOHN JAY.

To Gouverneur Morris.

*Johnston's Correspondence of Jay*, I. 445.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Paris, Nov. 15th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I should have answered your letter respecting the *Terpsichore* Frigate in course, had it not been for some hopes I flattered myself with of obtaining what you requested. Doctor Franklin being severely attacked with the gout, I did not incline to urge him on the subject at the time. I have since laid the matter before him, but I find him so distressed for want of funds, that although he is sensible of the advantages of your proposal, yet it is not in his power to do any thing to promote it. This gives me real pain on your account, but I confess still more on account of the public, as I know you cannot fail of finding honorable service in America; but a frigate under your command on the American coast would be of great service to our country in the convoy of their trade, as well as in distressing that of the enemy. I take the liberty of enclosing you a letter for Mr. Wilson, and will do myself the honor of writing you again before you sail, especially if any thing occur here. I could not, with any propriety, make any application but to Doctor Franklin on the subject of your letter, and from the above circumstance I found him totally averse to any thing that might incur the

least expence in the present situation of public finances.  
I am, with the most sincere Respect and Attachment,  
Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,  
S. DEANE.

John P. Jones, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CAPT. ISAAC ALL.

Paris, Nov. 15th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 10th, and thank you for the intelligence you give of the state of the Continental currency, though disagreeable enough in itself. I do not fully understand your letter. Perhaps I did not explain myself well in mine to you. You give me the prices current, I suppose, in Continental money, and say rum at 22*£*. 10*s*. in the body of your letter. You say the agents give *£*37. 10. You say *Mr. Morris had received a large share of it*, which those who paid him were unwilling to receive again. Was this the old money or the new? It is the state of the new money I am most solicitous about, and you will forgive the trouble I give you in asking of you one line further on that subject. I thank you for your offer of carrying letters or commands for me, and will improve the occasion, in a post or two, to send you some letters for America; and, if you do not sail soon, shall be glad of sending out a trunk by you to my brother.

I am, &c.,  
S. DEANE.

Capt. Isaac All.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, Nov. 16th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 26th, ulto. and 1st instant, this day. I had begun to doubt whether my

reflections on our political situation had not been a little too free, which, with the total want of any news for a month past, has caused my silence. For tho' I find the settlement of accounts a much more tedious and perplexing affair than I imagined, and which has called for my whole time, yet I should have stolen an hour for what is so agreeable to me, the conversing with you, though but on paper. I am rejoiced to find my first letter came safe to your hands, and hope soon to be informed of the success of the application. Nothing has occurred to change my reflections on the facts I sent you the 18th, of Sept., and I am now convinced that the consequences which I then drew are not only just, but more extensive than what I then imagined, and that, after all, our prudence and attention without some fortunate events of war, will hardly be sufficient. I confess that I have done wrong in touching on past grievances, which are in a great degree personal, and the more so since the complaining of them to you in your situation was rather indelicate, as my complaints are against those who are at the head of our public affairs, and in whose immediate service you are ; but in writing to you, I considered the friend only. This must be my excuse ; and as I promise not to touch on this subject in future, you will indulge me a little in this. You say you do not find my case parallel with that of the gentleman's I have compared mine with ; that I was not blamed for omitting to settle finally my accounts in France, but for not being in a capacity, when in America, to shew what those accounts were. I confess to you I know not how I could have shewn what the accounts were without having first settled them. But, my Dear Sir, the case is different ; I did shew what those accounts were, as far as was possible, without actual and minute settlement, having, within six weeks after my arrival, laid before Congress an authentic account of all monies received or paid out by our banker, and a general account, or explanation, of what the monies had been paid for. You were not then in

Congress, and, therefore, it is probable that you might not be informed of this fact. My case is not parallel with the other gentlemen's, for they took their own time to return ; yet one of them (Mr. Adams), though he had nothing to do in Paris, did not carry over any accounts. Mr. Lee may, but he has never had any examined, as directed by Congress. What his reception will be time will discover. You say you know not if those gentlemen are or will be chargeable with the like incapacity, but as it is a well known fact that their accounts never have been settled, and that the whole burthen of it is actually devolved on me, and that it is not so much my own accounts as those of the Commissioners at large that I am now laboring on, there can be no doubt of this real incapacity, whether charged with it or not. Mr. Lee and Mr. Adams received more public monies than I ever did. Even Mr. William Lee and Mr. Izard, the latter of which never made one step out of Paris, or did any thing, except to receive his commission, each received more ; yet neither are blamed for not accounting. But I have said enough on this subject. You say it will still remain a question whither my measures were prudent, and I thank you for telling me you think some of them were not. This is a proof of your friendship, and a stile in which, I think, one real friend will write to another. I confess, on reflection, I do not approve of all the measures I took, but they were such as the times dictated, and such as at the time I judged most prudent. Though viewed at this distance, they may be deemed less prudent than they really were. I find most of them produced real benefit to America, and that the worst consequences of any of them have fallen solely on myself ; but, allowing some or all of my measures to have been imprudent, still my complaint lies against Congress for not informing me of what I had done wrong, that I might have had an opportunity of vindicating myself in the best manner in my power. Their refusal of this was an act of injustice and tyranny which Monarchs themselves are but seldom

guilty of. With respect to the duplicity of some of my pretended friends in Congress, I had some suspicion of it before I left America and since. I have more than suspicion, I have full proof of it. Letters sent from hence with express orders to be communicated to me, if in Paris, and to be made use of in Congress for my justification, were suppressed. I know they were received, and I have copies of them. What is more, the persons capable of this, and who appeared on all occasions publicly to support me against the Lee faction, since the displacing of them, men have declared they had no view of serving me or my cause, but to make use of both to destroy the Lee interests. Men who can act such a part—I without blushing boast of it—must have adopted the reverse of your maxim *Nil utile nisi quod honestum*. This maxim is a good one, but much too old to be adopted by most of our modern politicians in America.

I have now nearly finished the settlement of my accounts and those of the Commissioners, the result of which is a large ballance in my favor. Will this establish my reputation and procure justice for the injuries I have sustained in my character and fortune? I do not flatter myself with any such hope. The men to whom I am to apply for this justice are those who have injured me, and in doing it must condemn themselves, a self denial or heroism not to be expected from them; but supposing them capable of it, will this, will it recall the envenomed shafts of calumny shot at me from behind their shield? I grant that the bulk of the people mean well, but from a suspicion that the greater part of men in public employ are dishonest, a suspicion at this time more prevalent with the people of America than with any other, and which many in public employ are ever propagating, you will find fifty, nay, five hundred, who receive with open ears a calumny, and who will propagate the same with as much industry as if their character and interest depended on its being spread and believed, to a single one who will take any pains to undeceive



himself or others. This circumstance is sufficient to deter almost any one from attempting to vindicate himself by publications, and to write down calumny, which has more tongues and heads than a thousand Hydras. I am fully sensible of the importance of the subject to me, my son, and, in some degree, to my friends who wish to be able to vindicate my reputation, and I have collected materials, and have begun to arrange them for a full and ample history of all my transactions whilst in the public service. But I fear the times will not bear the publication of it in America, as yet, and will it serve our cause to have it published in Europe? I know not how it is with you, but in France the character of our public men and measures is much too low already, and our intrigues and cabals are looked on with contempt even by our friends. Further, when I review what I have seen and met with the last four years, I fear to trust myself too suddenly on the subject. In short, unless a peace take place soon, or a change of measures, publications will not be of any service either to me or America, and this reflection alone is sufficient to restrain me for the present. Mr. Williams has been abused for serving the public. He has been represented in America as a defaulter and speculator. To wipe off the calumny he has had all his accounts and transactions audited by the Auditor of Congress; they have been approved of, and mathematical demonstration given that he was neither, but that he had served his country faithfully and for about two per cent., whilst the other agents took five. His accounts, thus audited and certified with vouchers, have been transmitted to Congress now more than 12 months, yet by the last accounts they still lie on file; the proofs of his innocence and services are suffered to sleep. Is not this an instance how little attention is given by Congress to the doing of justice to their servants? Many in that body know (I believe all do) that I entered the public service with a fair character and an easy fortune. All America know that however imprudent some of my measures appears, I rendered

essential services to my country, yet Congress have refused to do anything to rescue my character when vilified by one of their confidential servants, or to repair my fortune spent in their service. I can have nothing to expect from them until times alter ; this period, I hope, is not far distant. I wait for it, and will be ready to improve the favorable moment. Though I apologized at first for entering on the subject, I fear I must do it again, and repeat my promise not to enter on it again. Would to God we could transport ourselves, not to Mrs. Howes (Pa. is a disagreeable place at present), but to some private interview for a week. The time would be agreeably and, I doubt not, usefully spent. Count D'Estaing is daily expected. The English fleet are at sea ; the last accounts left them off Ushant. Rodney is gone to North America ; no late news. I am glad you are like to procure cloathing. Pray hasten it out, for it is greatly wanted ; all that was engaged here is still in port and like to be so for some time. I wish there were any grounds to believe the [cipher translated] report from North Carolina of the appreciation of our paper, which you will write me, but I assure you there are none. I have letters from Philadelphia, in September, and prices current, by which I find that the depreciation for four months past has been more rapid than at any former period ; 110 £ was given for a guinea, and the State paper was following, though not so rapidly. It is not so easy a matter to cure the wound given in March last to public faith and credit as many suppose it. You say that Spain wants much, and leave me to make the comment. I need not this information to settle my opinion as to Spain, when proud, insolent, and obstinate they have engaged in a war in which they have much to loose and can gain nothing. I expect little from them but, by a show and parade, to alarm the English during the war. This will gain them some weight in a negotiation, but it will not be on our part. Have you not heard of the toad that prayed for two tails ? Precisely their case. The maxim *nil utile* has

as little force in America as in England, or in Congress, where it has given place long since to another, which is, that the end justifies the act, and that public necessity will justify every act that occasioned Congress to emit paper, to make it a legal tender, to force orphans and widows and honest creditors to receive it equal to silver and gold. Public necessity led them to pledge their sacred faith and honor for the redemption of it, and public necessity is to justify the damning of it intirely, and is to justify the deceiving of the most innocent and helpless part of the community, as well as all who have voluntarily put faith in their promises. Are we the only people who have a right to use the plea? I subscribe to your confession of faith; but though men profess to believe that they are travelling on to a better world, they are generally willing to sell out their interest in that to realize in this, and no men carry this kind of stock jobbing so high as politicians, between whom and the priests, who pretend to most knowledge and interest in the future, we stand a great chance to be bled out of both. France desires a peace as much and more than England. The present unfortunate reports, it is feared, will have a great impression in France, as their trifling display has caused in America. The French are successful in nothing, and, in addition to this, may at last totally desert us. This needs no comment. The best that can be hoped for is to escape by flight. The disasters of this campaign in America, compared with the promises with which it was opened, will show a languor which cannot be misunderstood, and the full force of it will be felt by the sufferers. The King's speech in Parliament, the Army, and the whole of the Nation is for war, at least with France. Their Funds do not decline. The money for the next year is already secured. These are astonishing facts, but such they are, and this consequence is to be drawn from them: that if our friends do not act in a different style and with more energy they will fail, and for them we shall be ruined.

These are melancholy reflections. I will leave them.

Laurens is not considered of any consequence by the Ministry. All the noise made about him is to serve certain purposes. His papers, etc., are all in the hands of North. How could this happen? What must we think of his permitting his papers to be taken? One moment was sufficient to prevent this. He told the Ministry, on his being ordered into prison, that it was against the rights of nations to detain him. He possibly thought his papers, etc., equally sacred. Notwithstanding the power of England, the Ministry desires peace. The French Ministry desire it still more. America out of the question, their affairs might be settled in one day. Hence, the ground for my fears. France, in settling the account of the war to this time with England, will be a sufferer, yet must be glad to get to the point set out from. Spain is no better off, and for them we have nothing to throw into the account against the trials and sufferings taken from them. The war, then, you will say, must go on. I know not which I dread most, a continuance of the war or a negotiation. The first will occupy our country with a foreign army, and with that in the center of our country, can we be free?

And are bloody (Indian) mercenaries the only ones to be opposed? It is a dreadful alternative to be reduced to the choice of tyrants after having risked everything to conquer one. Twenty thousand French forces in America are talked of. If it take place, what will be the situation of America? You will smile that I distrust France. The last year's operations and the present conduct will justify me in it. I should distrust any one in such a situation. Ambition is disposed to overlook all bounds and laws when armed with power. Such intrigues exist in France as well as in Spain. The independance of America is become an old story. The first object of the war is already out of sight. Our influence is next to ended. The only actual object is, if England or France and Spain shall in future give the law; but I have tired myself and you effectually. My next shall be shorter, one thing in its favor. I

design and hope it will be on a more agreeable subject.  
My compliments, etc.,

S. DEANE.

Hon. John Jay, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOSHUA JOHNSON.

Paris, Nov. 19th, 1780.

SIR,—In examining the accounts of the Commissioners for a settlement, I find you charged Octo. 3d, 1777, to cash paid by order of B. Franklin and S. Deane, nine hundred and four livres. Finding no account, what the payment was for, nor recollecting any thing about it, obliges me to pray you would favor me with an account of the disbursements for which that payment was made; and as I have nearly closed the other accounts, you will oblige me in sending it as soon as you conveniently can by the post. I pray you to present my compliments to Mrs. Johnson, and to be assured I am, with much Esteem, Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Joshua Johnson,  
Nantz.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO DARCY AND MOYLAN.

Paris, Nov. 19th, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,—I find, on a settlement of the accounts of the Commissioners of Congress, that you are charged Novr. 28th, 1778, to cash paid your draft, 246 livres 15s., but do not find the account of the disbursements for which the draft was made; and as I am impatient

to ballance those accounts, intreat you to favor me with this by the post. I have the honor to be, Gentlemen,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. Darcy & Moylan.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Paris, Nov. 21st, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 17th, to Doctor Bancroft, inclosing one to Doctor Franklin, came to hand in the Doctor's absence. Mrs. Bancroft, opening it, put it into my hands, and I have been this evening with Doctor Franklin, who informs me he has accepted the bills you mention, so that affair is got over; the other parts of your letter will be attended to by Dr. Bancroft when he returns, which will be in a day or two. Meantime I can only say that no man feels more sensibly than I do for the disappointments you have met with; every one who knows any thing of my history will believe what I say, but I have never lost sight of the great object, or suffered my ardor to abate on account of any thing I have met with, and I am confident that you are and will be animated with same principle. I hope this will reach you before you sail, and therefore pray your attention to the inclosed. I most ardently wish you a prosperous voyage and the success which you so greatly merit, and am, with the highest Esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Capt. J. P. Jones.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, Nov., 1780.

DEAR SIR,—In my last of the 16th, I took notice of every part of your two letters of the 26th, ultimo and 1st, instant, except your postscript. I should not have troubled you with any remarks on Adams, and the stile and conduct which he has uniformly held, had I not

considered it as prejudicial to the cause we have engaged in. I am perfectly willing that he should render himself ridiculous; but the follies and indiscretion which, under certain circumstances hurt none but individuals, and serve to divert the public, may, under different ones, produce the most extensive evils.

This man, who may have read much, appears to have retained nothing, except law knowledge and the fierce and haughty manners of the Lacedemonians and first Romans. These he has adopted as a perfect model to form a modern republican by, and has actually turned his brain so far as to think himself a Lycurgus or a Cato, and that the stile in the embassy of Fabricius to Phyrus and others of that day is to be adopted at the present.

I have not seen him, but Franklin and Bancroft assure me he is actually mad, and more so, though in a different way, than ever Lee was. Certain it is, Gentlemen here entertain strange ideas of him, and no very favorable ones of those who employed him as one of their ablest politicians. In a word, it is hard to say if he made himself the most obnoxious at Court or in Company. A man sent into a foreign country in a public capacity is generally taken as a sample of the people he represents. This needs no comment. It may be said that faction and cabal advance men to posts of trust, though every way improper, but in a free government no faction or cabal is supposed capable of this but by becoming the majority. The inferences drawn from this, and the uses which have been, and, I apprehend, will be, made of them, are to me extremely alarming. On a review of the history of states, politics, and revolutions, we find the greatest changes have been to appearances affected by the most trifling and often the most despicable causes and agents; and when we impute the revolutions that have taken place solely to them, we can but pity mankind, whose repose and happiness is exposed to be destroyed, and whose best concerted measures and fairest prospects may be defeated by the most contemptible circumstances or accident.

But on a nearer examination I am convinced that the revolutions which have to appearances been founded on trifling accidents are to be traced to a more important source. The materials have existed and been previously collected. The train laid, and the circumstances to which the whole is attributed is only an accidental spark out of many, any one of which is sufficient to fire the mine.

The great Duke of Marlborough was disgraced, and the face of affairs in all Europe changed, apparently, from a dispute about two or three pairs of gloves. Louis the XIV. turned the whole force of France on Holland, and came near annihilating that republic ostensibly on account of some expressions of a burgomaster who was in a public character at his court. The real causes of these and similar events must have existed previous to the accidents that put them in motion. When the cause for which a war is undertaken ceases to be popular, when a nation has become tired of it, and when a court is split into factions, one partly deriving their consequence and holding their posts from the continuance of the war, and the other party sure to gain the ascendant on a peace, in such a situation the most trifling circumstances or accidents are sufficient to change the face of public affairs.

I think you will understand my meaning better than I have explained it. [Cipher translated.] The Court of France is divided. Faction and party begin to shew themselves. Sartine is out. Maurepas is at this thrust aimed at Necker. The war between them is become mortal, and one must ruin the other, whatever be the consequence. I have no time to add, except that I have in part fulfilled my promise in my last. This letter is shorter, tho' the subject may be more agreeable. I will not enlarge, but for once sending you a sheet not entirely filled, subscribe myself most sincerely Yours,

S. DEANE.

To His Excellency, John Jay, Esq.

*Jay Mss.*



TO JONATHAN NESBITT.

Paris, Dec. 2d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I send you the enclosed packet for America, to be forwarded by Commodore Jones, except those letters marked 2, which, being duplicates, I pray you to send them by Capt. All, or the first vessel sailing to America, with orders to destroy, in case of capture, and in case of safe arrival to put into the post office of the port. I wrote Capt. All the 15th, ulto., but have no answer, at which am surprized, and fear he may be sick, as I presume he has not sailed for America. I make no excuse for troubling you with this packet, but pray if there is any thing here in which I can serve you, you will favor me with your commands. I am, with Esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Nesbitt.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN PAUL JONES.

Paris, Dec. 2d, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you the 21st, ulto., the result of my interview with Doctor Franklin on your account, since which I have received none of your favors. Our mutual friend Doctor Bancroft shewed me your letter to him, by which I find you were like soon to be again at sea; may your voyage be prosperous and short as possible. I have taken liberty to send our mutual friend Mr. Nesbitt a packet of letters, which pray you to take charge of. I should have enclosed them direct to you, but presumed it possible you might be already sailed, in which case the packet might be returned to me with additional expence. I sincerely wish you could carry with you not only news of important relief to America, but the relief itself with you; their situation

this winter must be distressing, but I really hope that something effectual will be done. I am not naturally disposed to be over sanguine on any prospect, and I have had sufficient experience to cool the little extra of that which I once had, and being entirely out of any political line, I am become a simple observer of what passes, but not an indifferent spectator of what effects my country or friends, among whom I hope I with justice consider you. I pray my compliments to all friends on your arrival, and am, with sincere Esteem and Attachment, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

John Paul Jones, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

December 2d, 1780.

MONSIEUR LE COMTE,—Ce n'est qu'avec la plus grande circonspection que j'ose aujourd'hui parler d'une chose qui n'a pas un rapport direct avec mes affaires personnelles : mais le spectacle d'un honnête homme souffrant, par l'injustice, ou plutôt par l'ingratitude de son pays qu'il servit avec tant de zèle, m'arrache au silence que je me suis imposé. Le pauvre M. Deane, ramené en Europe pour terminer toutes les affaires de commerce qu'il a entamées pour le Congrès, croyait trouver ici des fonds à lui qui le ferait subsister jusqu'à son retour à l'autre continent ; ou la reddition de ses propres comptes lui ferait rentrer toutes les avances qu'il a personnellement faites à sa patrie pendant le temps de sa position politique en France. Sa infidélité, sort negligence de ses agents ou amis, il se trouve aujourd'hui manquant du plus étroit nécessaire à Paris. Il s'est adressé à M. Franklin qui lui a répondu n'avoir aucun ordre d'argent à son égard. Je suis le seul auquel il a ouvert son cœur et montré une amertume qui approche

de quelque chose de plus funeste. Je suis moi-même percé si bas que je n'ai pas lui offrir que des ressources éloignés. Mais je me suis dit après son départ, qu'il y a peut-être une grande imprudence politique de pousser au désespoir des gens qui ont rendu de grands services à l'Etat ; et ce que cette misérable republique naissante ne cesse de faire à tous les hommes de mérite qui ont épousé ses intérêts. Je vois déjà des defections si funeste à la cause que je ne puis m'empêcher de frémir sur de pareils exemples. M. Deane est un homme à la France, et son dévouement lui a valu presque tous ses ennemis en Amérique. Croyez vous, Monsieur le Comte, que jamais la politique française ait fait une générosité plus utile et mieux placée que celle que j'ose proposer à votre Sagesse ? Un millier de louis offert à ce malheureux ex-négotiateur eleverait son cœur à une reconnaissance dont la France peut tirer au jour le plus grand service. Il a l'âme belle et le cœur sensible ; il ne peut se passer d'un prompt secours, et sous quelque forme qu'il lui soit offert, comme don, comme prêt, comme il vous plaira ; cet argent sera peut-être placé au plus haut intérêt : mais le ton profondément affecté dont il m'a parlé de son pays, de lui, de son fils qui est au collège à Paris, de sa situation actuelle, et de l'ingratitude qui la cause me fait frémir.

Jamais, Monsieur le Comte, un avis oiseux, ou hasardé, ne sortera de ma bouche. C'est à votre Sagesse à pèsér celui-ci. Mon devoir est rempli. Depuis quelque temps il est bien d'un mon devoir ; et ceux qui arrêtent les grandes opérations du gouvernement sur l'Amérique et celle du négociant éclairé qui brûle de joindre un peu d'utilité à vos grands travaux — ces gens là, dis-je, sont bien coupables à mes yeux ! Je renferme en moi la dure extention de cette idée pour me borner à vous assurer du très respectueux dévouement avec lequel,

Je Suis, etc.,

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

*Archives Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris.*

## TRANSLATION.

M. LE COMTE,—It is with extreme diffidence that I venture to speak today of a matter that has no direct relation to my personal affairs ; but the spectacle of a worthy man suffering in consequence of the injustice, or, rather, the ingratitude of his country, that he has served with so much ardor, leads me to break the silence that I had resolved to maintain. Poor Mr. Deane, brought to Europe in order to conclude all the business that he had undertaken for Congress, and expecting to find the funds to enable him to live here until his return to the other side, or that the settlement of his own accounts would reimburse him for all advances that he had made to his Country during the period of his political mission in France, now finds himself without the means of subsistence through the dishonesty or carelessness of his friends or agents. He has applied to Doctor Franklin, who informs him that there are no instructions for furnishing him with money. I am the only person in whom he has entirely confided, and he shows a bitterness that borders on something worse. I am myself so embarrassed that I can offer him only temporary assistance ; yet after his departure I reflected that it was, perhaps, a grave political error to drive to desperation those who have rendered important services to the State, as this contemptible, new-born republic continually does to all deserving men who have forwarded its interests. Already I have noticed desertions of such evil omen from his cause that I tremble when I think of them. Mr. Deane is a partizan of France, and his devotion accounts for nearly all his enemies in America.

Do you believe, Mr. le Comte, that French policy has ever performed a generous act more useful or better bestowed than this that I venture to submit to your judgement ? A million louis accorded to this unfortunate ex-commissioner will awaken a sense of obligation from which France may some day derive the greatest advan-

tage. He is a man of fine feelings, and capable of gratitude. He cannot do without prompt assistance, and in whatever form it may come, as a gift or a loan, or however you please, the money will, perhaps, be bearing the highest interest. At any rate, I am uneasy, observing his profound emotion in talking with me of his country, himself, his son, who is at school in Paris, his present situation, and the ingratitude that has occasioned it. A trivial or irresponsible suggestion, Mr. le Comte, will never come from me. It is for you to weigh what I have said. My duty is done. For some time past it is far from being my duty, and those who retard the important operations of the Government in regard to America, and of the intelligent agent who ardently desires to effect something useful in connection with your great exertions, these people, I say, have much to answer for. I suppress further comment in this strain, and only assure you of the devotion with which I am, &c.,

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

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TO GÉRARD DE RAYNEVAL.

Passy, December 9th, 1780.

SIR,—Your obliging letter of the 5th did not come to my hand until yesterday morning, and I have since been confined to my Chamber by a severe Cold, which prevents acknowledging in Person the sense I have of the seasonable assistance offered me by the Count de Vergennes.

I must, therefore, pray you to make him my grateful acknowledgements, and to assure him that I will improve the first moment my Health will permit me to convince him that no imprudence or neglect of mine has been the cause of the difficulty in which I find myself involved, and from which He has generously offered to relieve me.

I hope in a few weeks to have my accounts finally and fully stated, and my affairs so arranged as to be able to repay the sum lent me. But no time will efface from my mind the sense I have of his kindness.

I have the honor to be with great respect, Sir,  
Your most humble Servant,

S. DEANE.

To M. Gérard de Rayneval.

*Archives Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris.*

WILLIAM LEE TO ARTHUR LEE.

Anvers, Dec. 10th, 1780.

\* \* \* \* \*

YOUR former minister, Mr. Silas Deane, we are told, since his return to France, has been continually employed in invectives against his country. According to him, America is ruined, and must be subjugated by England; therefore all the aid France gives is so much thrown away. We are surprised at this, as he lives at Passy with your minister, and seems to be his favorite and prime councillor. Mr. Deane adds, also, that your grand Congress is composed of fools and knaves; we hope he has not experienced them to be so.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Ford's Letters of William Lee, page 835.*

FROM JAMES WILSON.

Philadelphia, Jan. 1st, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,—Mr. Duer informed you of the reasons why I could not write to you when he sent his letters from Philadelphia. I have been since that time favoured with yours of the 23d of August last, from Paris. The former letter from Nantes, to which you

refer, is not yet received. I most sincerely congratulate you on your return to that country which knows, and which has the justice to acknowledge, your merits. This congratulation, you must confess, is disinterested, since the very event on which it is formed is likely to deprive me, for a considerable time, of conversations similar to those in which I was often happy, while you was in Philadelphia.

You have heard, and you have been astonished at, the infamous treason of Arnold. You will not be surprised to hear that your enemies and mine have endeavoured to throw a shade over the characters of those who had any acquaintance with him. Such endeavours have happily been as fruitless as they have been malicious.

The affairs of Pennsylvania have taken, and continue to take, a favourable turn. A number of very respectable citizens are now in the General Assembly. Among others, Mr. Morris, General Mifflin, Col. Bird, Col. Patton, and Col. Delany. Mr. Morris, I have not the least doubt, may be president next year, if we can prevail on him to accept of the office. Our finances continue still deranged, but our comfort is that our resources are by no means exhausted. The army is in winter quarters, a part near West Point, and a part near Morristown. The several States are making compensations for the losses which the troops have suffered by depreciation, and are taking measures for completing their quotas of recruits by the opening of the next campaign.

A. Lee, has, I believe, been much disappointed on and since his arrival at Philadelphia; no eclat, and no proceedings against those whom he dislikes. The venerable Doctor Franklin maintains his ground among those whose opinions should be valued. Notice, indeed, was given in Congress that a motion would be made for recalling him. But those who gave the notice thought it prudent, when they saw its impressions, never to make the motion.

I perused, with much satisfaction, your letter to —,

and am perfectly satisfied that every part of it is justifiable. Your strain is natural to one who has been most injuriously treated, and who is conscious of having merited a very different reception. Agreeably to your desire, I shewed the letter to Mr. Morris and Mr. Thomson. They were both of opinion that it was prudent not to deliver it at that juncture. My own sentiments coincided with theirs. I have since taken the liberty of shewing it to Mr. Duer, who has taken it with him to the State of New York. We think that it may be usefully converted into a publication at a proper season. As the contingency, on which you expressly directed me to deliver the letter, has, fortunately, not taken place, I have used the discretionary power you gave me, and have acted for you as I would have done for myself. This shall be my future rule.

We are every now and then encouraged by spirited and successful enterprises in the Southern States. The enemy must, upon the whole, have been great sufferers by their expeditions into that part of the continent.

I am happy that the proposals made in France on the subject of masts have been approved of. I hope soon to hear, through you, of similar accounts from Spain. The incursions of the Indians have prevented any attempts to procure masts up Delaware, but I have got near an hundred of tolerable dimensions, cut up Schuylkill, which are ready to be brought down by the first freshes. I sent Mr. Hatton, the inspector, to my lands on Lackewaxin Creek, and he gives me a very favourable report of the mast-timber on them. He explored the creek from its mouth to my lands, and says there is only one obstruction in it, which, he thinks, may be removed for one hundred pounds Pennsylvania currency. So soon as the situation of the country will permit, or guards for the workmen can be procured, I will turn my most vigorous exertions to that quarter, and have not the least doubt but that I shall meet with success.

In your letter of the 4th of June last, you mention



my purchases of lands up Delaware, and ask me if I incline to sell a part. To say truth, I think this is rather a time for purchasing than for selling, if we consider the present prices of back lands in this country. Besides my tract on Lackewaxin Creek, on which the mast-timber is, I have a right to some very valuable lands, ten thousand acres of which be a few miles higher up the creek. The titles are not yet fully compiled, and cannot be so till the Land Office shall open. I would sell those ten thousand acres with a warranty of the title ; that is to say, I would engage to return all the money received by me, with interest, in case my title should prove to be deficient. On this foundation I would sell the land for three Spanish milled dollars per acre, or money of France equivalent. This, I confess, is a much higher sum than I could *now* obtain here for the lands. But then, I expect that some years hence they will be worth as much to me or any one else, and then will encrease faster in value than the Sum at Interest would do. In the mean time I could make *other* purchases with the money. You now see the principles on which I go. I authorise you to make propositions accordingly. They would suit only a person who could afford to lay out a sum of money on a distant, but profitable speculation. You know the situation of the country, and how little land carriage there is to Philadelphia.

In any purchases I may make with views of this nature, I shall be happy, if you chuse, to interest you equally with myself, whether what I am now going to mention take place or not.

I think that, at this period, a very valuable land scheme might be formed and carried into execution by gentlemen in Europe who have the command of money. If it is extensive I would undertake the management of it in this country. You would probably undertake the management of it in Europe. But a fund of one hundred thousand guineas, at least, would be necessary to render it an object worthy of sufficient attention, either

to those who should manage it or to those who should embark in it. If there is any probability that such a scheme will be adopted, you can say of me what you think, from my character and profession, I deserve, and no more.

I am anxious to know the fate of my nomination to be Advocate General. While I am in suspense it is impossible for me to apply with a sufficient degree of attention and industry, either to the duties of the office or to the pursuit of my private practice. I rely on your good offices concerning this subject. I have written on it to Mr. Gerard. I have also communicated to him several things relating to the Illinois and Wabash land companies. To these communications I beg leave to refer you.

It will always give me very particular satisfaction to hear from you. Mrs. Wilson desires me to present you her best compliments; please to offer mine to Doctor Franklin.

I am, with great Affection and Esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

JAMES WILSON.

Hon. Silas Deane, Esquire.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FRANCIS DANA TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, Jan. 1st, 1781.

\* \* \* \* \*

SOON after my arrival here, which was on the evening of the 23d, I had a visit from *Francisco* [Silas Deane], a long one, during which we went over much political ground, which convinced me every thing we had heard of the extraordinary conversation of this man was strictly true. Our country, according to him, was already conquered; the power of Great Britain rising above all control; that of her enemies almost spent; Holland absolutely to be crushed in the course

of three months; the armed neutrality in consequence annihilated; the British manifesto extolled for its cogent reasons above all the similar acts of the belligerent powers; all Europe blind to their own interests, which, in fact, were in direct repugnance with those of America, particularly those of Holland and all the northern powers; Congress a mere cipher, having lost all its influence every where in America; and, to crown the whole, an apology for the infamous apostate Arnold. I kept my temper and heard him out. You may easily conjecture what my feelings were on such an occasion, and I manifested them in some parts of my replies.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Works of John Adams, VII. 350.*

#### CERTIFICATE FOR JOHN SHEE.

Paris, Jan. 13th, 1781.

I CERTIFY that I have not sold or disposed of any of the within mentioned Certificates,\* which the Power of Attorney annexed impowered me to have done, and this day I have, pursuant to the request of Mr. Shee, deposited this instrument, and the power of attorney sent me by Mr. Shee, in the hands of his Excellency B. Franklin, Esqr., Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America in France.

S. DEANE.

*Holbrooke Mss.*

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, Jan. 18th, 1781.

\* \* \* \* \*

You will receive this by Mr. Deane, who has a great regard for you, and whom I recommend to your civi-

\* See Deane's letter of Sept. 4, 1780.

ties, though the gentlemen at present with you may be prejudiced against him, prejudices that time will cause to vanish by showing they were groundless. I enclose a packet for Leyden, which I shall be glad to hear is delivered safe, and therefore desire your care of it.

I am, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., Wharton Ed., IV. 239.*

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TO SAMUEL DELAP.

Paris, Jan. 21st, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have been expecting almost every week for some months past to set out for Bordeaux, which has prevented my writing; but am unexpectedly turned another way, being obliged to set out for Holland tomorrow. Though I long since knew I must make that journey, yet I intended to have delayed it until spring, and promising myself the pleasure of waiting on you, and in person adjusting accounts which have too long lain unsettled, I have until now omitted mentioning the subject to you, but as I am confident you are as solicitous as I can be to have them closed, I pray you to send them to Paris, inclosed to me under cover to Doctor Franklin, Minister for the United States of America. As I shall not be above three weeks at most on my journey, I hope to find them here on my return, and it shall be my first business to have them settled. I must be the more earnest with you on this subject, as I have now nearly finished the accounts I have any concern in, either of a public or private nature, and by your assistance shall be able to complete a settlement immediately on my return. I have the honor to be, with much Esteem and Attachment, Dear Sir,

Yours, etc.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Delap, Bordeaux.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN NESBITT.

Paris, Jan. 22d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have taken the liberty of sending to your care the enclosed letters, which I pray you to forward by Capt. Bell, or the first vessel going to America, desiring the Captain, or whoever you trust them with, to destroy them in case of capture. I should prefer the Luzerne especially, commanded by Capt. Bell, to any other vessel, had I freight for America; but I have none, nor do I know of any of my friends who want to send that way at present. I shall set out tomorrow for Holland, and on my return shall write you; in the meantime, if any letters or intelligence arrive from America for me, I pray you to send the same to Doctor Bancroft, under cover to Doctor Franklin. I have the Honor to be, with great sincerity, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. J. Nesbitt.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, January 22d, 1781.

DEAR BROTHER,—This will be handed you by Monsr. Caviere, whom I take the liberty of recommending to your kind offices and best civilities. He will probably arrive in New England and call on you in his way to Philadelphia, in which case I hope that the young gentleman will find a home at my house to refresh and rest on his journey, and that it will be in your power to give him such information as may expedite his arrival at Philadelphia. I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Barnabas Deane, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO THOMAS MUMFORD.

Paris, Jan. 22d, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,—I forward this to you by Mr. Caviere, who is bound for Philadelphia, but will most probably touch at some port in New England, and may, of course, call on you in his journey to Philadelphia. I therefore take the liberty to introduce and recommend him to you as a very worthy young gentleman, who proposes to reside in America for some time, and pray you to afford him all those good offices and civilities which I know you are always happy in having an opportunity of shewing to gentlemen introduced to you. With sincere and affectionate respects to your lady, I am most sincerely your sincere Friend, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Thomas Mumford, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN JAY.

Paris, Feb. 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—It is now several months since I have been so happy as to receive any of your letters, and as you must in that time have received several from me, I am utterly unable to account for your silence. I have nearly closed all my accounts, public as well as private, but Mr. Johnson, the auditor appointed by Congress, refuses to act, and Doctor Franklin says he cannot act, nor can he even pay any part of the considerable sum due to me without orders from Congress. Thus, my Dear Sir, I have been abused in America as a defaulter, whilst a large sum was due to me, obliged to return to Europe at my own expence to settle the public accounts, and am now refused payment under pretence that the accounts and vouchers must first be examined and passed in Congress. I do not blame Doctor Franklin; he is sensible of my situ-

ation, and acts the friendly part, but his hands are tied up by Congress. I will not venture to say any thing further on the subject, least I give you offence, which I know not but I have already done in my former letter. I have several times wrote you on the subject of a mast contract, which, with a letter from the late Don Juan [De Miralles], I sent you last fall. I must again pray you to inform me if it has been presented to the Minister, and what reception it met with, and if there is a probability of its being accepted of. As this is a subject of much importance to several of our mutual friends in America, as well as to myself, I must pray your attention to it, and that I may have an answer as soon as possible. It is probable that I shall return to America some time next spring; I wait only to know the real situation of affairs there to take my resolution. Our present accounts are extremely vague and uncertain; in London they have published an account of the revolt of Ethan Allen and the Green Mountaineers, and of the whole of the Pennsylvania Line, said to have happened the beginning of January, but there appears great reason to set the whole down as a forgery, though many circumstances are given. Arnold has gone to the southward, supposed for Virginia or Maryland, with about four thousand men, chiefly new-raised refugees and deserters. I think he can make no great impression with such a body, though he may be very troublesome.

Col. Laurens, Junr., is on his passage for France, charged with some extraordinary powers and dispatches to this Court. I know not the particulars, but I understand he is to be in some kind an Envoy Extraordinary for particular purposes and for a certain time only. Col. Palfrey is coming with him as Consul-General in France. This is the substance of our news from America. I returned but two days since from Holland, where for the present a dead calm prevails, all commerce being suspended, and military preparations moving too slowly to be perceived by a bystander,

though I doubt not they are laying a good foundation. You are no stranger to the genius of the nation. My best respects wait on Mrs. Jay, and am with great respect and attachment, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

I have a letter from our friend Mr. Morris, who with his lady have been very ill with a fever, but were recovering. The last autumn was extreme sickly at Philadelphia.

Hon. John Jay, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC MOSES.

Paris, Feb. 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 15th, Dec., in which you express your surprize and disappointment at not receiving either letters or goods from me. As to the former, I have written and sent on many, and the inclosed copy of mine of the 28th, of Sept. will satisfy you as to the latter. Though I have repeatedly urged your house at St. Eustatia, in letters which must have arrived safe, on the subject of the bills remitted them, and on the affair of the schooner Chance and her cargoes, I have not a line from them. I returned two days since from Amsterdam, where I found that the tobacco and the bills in which I was interested, and on which I had relied, had been applied to the credit of your house in St. Eustatia, without the least reference to me. I presume, that you must have been ignorant of this when you wrote your letter of the 15th, otherways you could not have been surprized at my not sending goods. I am sensible of the advantages which might have been made, which renders my situation more cruel, and from which I must pray you to relieve me by liquidating that account and remitting to



me the amount due to me, with which, if you send me any funds at all, I can go on to ship out goods. But I am not willing to hazard sending on a credit whilst insurance is not to be had, and whilst in consequence I cannot be certain of fulfilling my engagements. In Holland nothing can be done at present; all business is suspended, an universal embargo being laid on all vessels, even to fishing boats. I suppose that Santo Croix must now come in place of St. Eustatia with you, and in Europe I think that Ostend and Gottenburg or Marstrand must be the best ports to send to. You will have heard of a certain gentleman's embarrassment, and you know that my funds were principally in his hands; and when I assure you that I have not been able to touch one livre of them, you will judge of my situation.

The number of Privateers from England have been doubled in number since the declaration of war against Holland, which, with the English frigates, have made dreadful havoc on the Dutch commerce. No prospects of peace nor probability of a loan for America. England is preparing to make great exertions at sea the next summer. They have near forty sail of the line on the stocks, and a much larger number of frigates; in short, they seem resolved to dispute the empire of the sea with all Europe. I hope you will exert yourselves in America, and not build your hopes on troops from France, for I am of opinion that none will be sent. The Loan Office Certificates are in the same credit as when I wrote the enclosed. Tobacco is rising, but advise you to send northward, and to send only the James River quality.

I am with much Esteem, Dear Sir,  
Yours, etc.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Isaac Moses.

P. S.—I expected, when I wrote you in Sept. last, to have sent out some goods; I have not sent out a shil-

ling on any account, owing to the various and unexpected disappointments I have met with.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO SIMEON DEANE.

Paris, Feb. 23d, 1781.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have not received any letter from you since the one you wrote from Philadelphia in Sept. last. I have written urgently to Mr. Moses on the subject of my accounts with him, and pray you to urge him on the same. As we are quite uncertain as to the state of Virginia, I am extremely anxious for you and your affairs there. I hope soon to receive letters which may relieve me. No prospect of peace at present. Great Britain appears resolved to hazard all, rather than give up her claim over America, and is now augmenting its navy greatly. The Dutch commerce has suffered immensely, and is now totally suspended; not a vessel is permitted to put to sea on any accounts by the States. I am just returned from Holland; and though I found the nation greatly enraged against England, I am sorry to say that I found nothing like that active energy which is necessary to push on a war with such a power as Great Britain. No loan nor the prospect of any in Europe for us. But if reports are true, our finances in America cannot be worse than they are. [Cipher translated.] You are not to expect any thing from France, unless promises and delays, and then a trifle of money just to keep you from sinking entirely. From Spain and Holland you will not have even that, for they will not help us at all. No troops nor money will be sent to America from France, and England will prove strongest at sea, notwithstanding the war with Holland. This for yourself and friends. Our independence is nearly out of the question, and if England centers its force on us, will become entirely so, in my opinion. Indeed, without money, credit, or friends, what can you do?

You have said nothing about your Brigantine more than that she was unfortunate. Have you lost her entirely? Pray be more particular in your letters, and give me the state of the country. A voyage to Gottenburg or Marstrand would do well, if tobacco can be got out. I am acquainted with a Mr. Chalmers of Gottenburg, who belongs to a very good house there, but it is to no purpose to talk of commerce if the enemy are in your bay. I have now nearly closed all my accounts here, but to no purpose, for I cannot obtain the ballances, because Congress have not examined and passed them; and Mr. Johnson of Nantes, appointed their inspector or auditor, refuses to act. This is as cruel as it is wicked, but it is all of a piece. I shall send my son to Geneva for two years, by which time I hope the war may be over, and better days once more shine on us and our distracted country. I have thoughts of venturing once more to America with my accounts, but the uncertainty in which I am with respect to every thing there deters me from resolving decisively. I fear that the coming season will increase the distraction and distress of America beyond any thing yet experienced there. The war with Holland is a most unfavorable circumstance for us. You in America will doubtless think differently, and conclude that England, by having another on hand, will be the less able to carry on the war against us. But we have too long been the dupes of such hopes and prospects, which our ignorance of the real situation, and disposition of the powers in Europe, have made us rely on. The truth is, that Holland is so totally unprepared either by land or sea for a war, that they will not for six months to come be able to do any thing effectually, if so soon; during this time their commerce and foreign possessions in both Indies will be ruined. The navies of France and Spain, which depended on Holland for stores, will suffer greatly, as well as the French foreign possessions in particular; in the mean time we, by being cut off from St. Eustatia and Curacoa, must suffer in proportion.

England is in high spirits. Thirty-eight millions sterling have been subscribed for the next year's service; the ministry will probably want twelve or fourteen millions. They have near one hundred sail of men of war on the stocks, about forty of which are of the line; by these they boast that during next summer, and before the Dutch can begin to act, they will have an addition to their navy equal to the whole force of Holland, besides the advantages of seizing on their commerce and possessions in the Indies before hand. I know you will be told different stories, but I have been on the spot, and I have no interest to deceive you or my countrymen. Holland is at this moment as far as ever from making their cause a common one with America. Spain acts in the same manner; and so long as such a system as the present is pursued, our country must remain the theatre of war, ravage, and devastation. Do you flatter yourselves that Spain wishes to see it otherways? Their conduct does not shew it; and can any man of common sense suppose that Spain wishes to see a mighty and warlike empire established in the vicinity of all its wealth and treasure? If this is common sense with you, it is not so elsewhere. The more our unhappy country is exhausted, divided, and weakened, the less there will be to be apprehended from them for a long time to come. But I must quit the subject by saying in one word that, unless our finances can be well established, our army increased and supported, and the natural and internal force of the continent brought to act with consistency and energy, the game will soon be up. I pray you to present my compliments to all friends in Virginia, in particular to Cols. Harrison, Banister, and Griffin.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Simeon Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

## TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, Feb. 23d, 1781. •

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have received but one letter from you since I left America, and that was written in June last, at New London, and a very short one it was. La Farque has sent out a box of goods which I have advised him to send to yours or to Mr. Mumford's care, as it may happen to fall most convenient. His orders are to sell for hard money only, and to vest the proceeds in a good bill on France, to be remitted him as soon as possible. The case is marked N. L. No. 15, and is shipped on board the Marquis La Fayette, bound for the first port she can arrive at to the northward. I have inclosed the invoice to Mr. Mumford by the ship, and have wrote him. We have little or nothing new here, and are in the most vexatious uncertainty as to the situation of affairs in America. Our friends who can give information to be relied on seem to neglect or decline writing. You are yourself one of the most culpable on this head. We have no prospect of peace. Great exertions are making in England to push the war next season with vigor at sea in every part of the world. Similar exertions are making in France; in Spain things move slowly, and no attention seems to be given to anything but to Gibraltar. In Holland, where I have lately been, they move still more slow; their commerce is totally suspended by a general embargo; what they had at sea has been in great part captured by the English, who, by striking so unexpectedly, have done much mischief and will probably do still greater in both Indies. However, the Dutch are preparing to put force against force, but as yet not a single ship of war has been sent to sea by them, nor even a privateer. They have immense stores on hand, and if they can be brought to act with energy and dispatch, may have a formidable fleet in six or eight months, but I think they

will not do any thing considerable at sea sooner. No loan for us, nor the prospect of any; in a word America must exert its internal force, and use its natural resources with consistency, energy, and vigor, or the game will soon become a very dangerous one on her part. I shall send my son for Geneva as soon as the weather will permit, and fix him there for two years. My accounts are nearly closed, but to no purpose, for the ballances is refused me until the accounts with original vouchers shall have been examined at Philadelphia, the auditor appointed here by Congress having refused to accept his commission. I make no comment on this; you will judge of my feelings and sufferings on the occasion. If the cruel, ungrateful, and unjust treatment of an individual merit the attention of Heaven, some men will have cause to fear. I declare to you, at the same time, that I feel nothing for myself compared with what I feel for my distressed, and, to all appearance, devoted country. It is possible I may see you next summer, as I have thoughts of coming over with my accounts in person, but I wait to know what your situation actually is, before I form any resolution. The ship that brings this comes with the stores promised last year. I am told they have been ready above nine months. I hope they may at last arrive safe and be of service, though I am sure they cannot be in season. You will present my love to sister Buck and the Captain, and compliments to all friends; and write me oftener and more fully.

I am, Dear Brother, most sincerely yours,

S. DEANE.

The case is recommended to care Monsr. Pelletier, second Captain of the ship.

B. Deane, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO THOMAS MUMFORD.

Paris, Feb. 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Inclosed is the invoice of a case of goods shipped to your address or that of my brother, as it may happen to be most convenient; they are mark'd N. L., No. 15, and belong to Nicholas La Farque, who has served me from my first arrival in France, in 1776, to this time. His orders are to sell them to the best advantage, for hard cash only, and to remit him the net proceeds in a good bill on France. My desire of rendering some service to this poor man, who has been rather unfortunate in his voyage to America with me, makes me trouble you with this small commission. If the ship should arrive at Philadelphia, which I do not expect, pray you to write to Mr. Morris, our mutual friend, who knows the owner, to execute the order. The box is consigned to the care of Monsr. Pelletier, second Captain of the ship Marquis La Fayette, to be delivered to you or your order. I have written you several times, and have received but one of your favors. Can give you no other news than what the papers and persons going from hence can acquaint you with. Tell your brother that his son is well and with Doctor Franklin. Though he may there learn the language and perfect himself in writing, yet accounts being the object, it is necessary he should send his directions. I have already been at some expence, the account of which I shall send him; but his son cannot be put to a merchant without a considerable addition to it, which he has not authorized me to make.

Wishing you and sister Nancy every human felicity,  
I am, Dear Brother,

Yours, &amp;c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S. My compliments to all friends, particularly of the family connection. I should write General Saltonstall, but dare not do it at present, for fear I should

offend him ; for as his hopes are, I doubt not, as usual, very sanguine as to the events of next year's campaign, and of the favorable prospects before us, I should perhaps offend him, or at least give him pain, if I lessened or attempted to lessen them, which I must infallibly do, if I touched on politics. Adieu.

Thomas Mumford, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, Feb. 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of the 21st of October was handed me the day before yesterday by Mr. Hazlehurst, to whom I shall be happy to render service, and which, as he designs for Holland, from whence I have just returned, may possibly be in my power. I am sorry to hear of your and Mrs. Morris's illness, and hope that this fever will excite you to have, by some means or other, your dyke meadows effectually drained by large canals, with rows of trees planted on the banks and on the sides of all your roads ; this will afford the most effectual prevention against such autumnal fevers, so far as they rise from the temperature of the air, from which physicians agree they take their chief source ; this will also adorn and beautify the country, and yield a real profit to the proprietors. If you effect this, I dare engage that twenty years hence—for by that time the trees will be well grown—it will afford you as much or more pleasure, on reflection, as any of the political squabbles of the present day, into which I find you are again forced. It could not have been your choice ; for me, I am almost determined to return to America this spring with my accounts, for I can find no one here either to examine, pass, or pay them, which is the hardest of the whole. The ballances, confessedly my due, is very consider-



able ; and I have now, at my own expence, settled the public accounts of my fellow commissioners, as well as of my own, until my leaving France, and even until the appointment of Doctor Franklin to be sole [commissioner] arrived ; but out of a ballance of more than three hundred thousand livres, I cannot obtain one sol for my support, and from another quarter I have met with no better treatment ; and, as it was less expected, affects me the more. But of this hereafter. If I resolve on returning, it may be deferred until I arrive ; if not, I shall state my case to you and a few friends at large in writing. I have to this moment been unable to obtain a settlement of Capt. Bell's unfortunate expedition to Marseilles. Mr. De Francy has undertaken it. I expected when I went to Holland to have found it furnished on my return ; but it is not done. I hope it will be in a few days. This comes by the ship *Marquis La Fayette*, in which *La Farque* has sent a case of goods consigned to our mutual friend, *Thomas Mumford*, as the ship may most probably go northward ; but if she should arrive at Philadelphia, pray you to enquire for it. It is marked N. L. No. 15, and under care of Monsr. Pelletier, second Capt. of the ship. Should it arrive, pray you to take charge of it and write to Mr. Mumford, as the articles will probably sell better with you than to the northward. He will undoubtedly order the articles to be sold at Philadelphia. I have taken the liberty to trouble you with this small affair, as I wish to encourage the poor man, who has been long attached to me, and who suffered in his last voyage with me. As you avoid entering on politics, you will allow me the same indulgence ; but I cannot but caution you against building too much on the Dutch War. Events will shew if my conjecture is right or not ; but to me it appears to be an unfavorable circumstance for us and for all the powers engaged against England. You go on associating, resolving, enacting, &c., to force a credit for paper. Are Americans really ignorant of what has passed and is

now passing in the world? If they are, we certainly are not become proof against our own experience; and all unitedly confirm the truth founded on reason and the principles of commercial common sense and experience, that every coercion measure come into, to force a credit on paper, ever has produced, and forever must produce, a direct contrary effect.

I have seen the Philadelphia papers for Oct., Nov., and Dec., and, to my surprize, found them full of the prescriptions of political quacks on this subject; and of associations and tests, &c. It seems as if the hurry and bustle of war had not left us no time to reason on the nature and basis of all paper credit, or to reflect on what we have experienced during the last five years only. Spain is an absolute government, a kingdom, possessed of the richest mines in the world. Spain last year wanted money; they dared not to risque the transportation of their treasures from the Indies; the court, therefore, attempted to make use of paper. Notes were issued, and capital bankers in Paris and elsewhere engaged to give them a circulation. Not content with this, severe penalties were announced on any Spanish subject who should refuse to take them as equivalent to silver or gold. The consequences are well known. The paper, which, without those coercive measures, might have possibly obtained a credit, depreciated instantly, the bankers were involved, and came near being ruined. This happened last summer, and there has been no course of exchange on Spain since. No one will take a bill, even at Paris, without an enormous discount, for every one presumes that the power which can oblige him to take paper in lieu of specie, however against his interest or inclination, may force him to any thing else. This has given a capital wound to the finance and credit of that kingdom, and of its commerce; and I mention it to convince, from experience on this side the water, the impracticability of giving any extensive or permanent credit to paper by coercive measures. Without intending it, I find

myself in the midst of politics, though I begun my letter with the simple and salutary subject of planting trees and draining meadows. I will, therefore, break off, wishing this may find you and Mrs. Morris re-established in health, and in the enjoyment of your wishes.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Robert Morris, Esqr.

N. B. Sent by the ship Marquis La Fayette letters to Mr. Moses, Mr. Morris, Mr. B. Deane, Mr. Simeon Deane, Mr. Chase, and Mr. Mumford.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Feb. 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received your favors of the 30th, ulto. and 14th, inst. I have been five or six weeks on a tour into Holland, which has prevented your hearing from me; and as I returned but two days since, have not time to send any thing by the ships, which I am told will sail the first fair wind after the arrival of the dispatches which set off this day. I thank you for the notice given me, and pray you to write to my brother Simeon Deane the state of the transaction respecting the goods shipped to you from Holland on his account, about which there was some misunderstanding with the Commissioners. We have nothing new from any quarter, and in Holland every thing is in a state of torpitude beyond what you can conceive of, all commerce suspended, and their warlike preparations go on (as yet) without either energy or vigor. It is probable they will awake in about six or eight months hence, and I do not believe they will sooner. I am happy to hear that Mrs. Williams is recovering,

and hope that her health may soon be re-established.  
I am, with great esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SAMUEL DELAP.

Paris, Feb. 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Above you have the duplicate of my last, and on my return from Holland two days since, not finding any letter from you, I take the liberty again to address you on the above subject, and pray that as soon as convenient to you, you will oblige me by giving me an answer to the above.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Delap,

*Thomas Mss*

TO JAMES CUMMINGS.

Paris, March 3d, 1781.

SIR,—I received your favor of the 26th, inclosing Mr. Milne's of the 19th, Dec. last, from Philadelphia, with his bill on me. As I have not disposed of the interest of Mr. Milne in the Illinois lands, nor am at present able to do it at any rate, I am under the necessity of returning the bill, which, being drawn conditionally, presume you will hold until some opportunity offer to make the sale agreeable to his directions. I thank you for the advice of the vessels about to sail, and I shall improve the occasion to write to Mr. Milne on the subject. I am, in the meantime, respectfully, Sir, your most obedt. servant,

S. DEANE.

Mr. James Cummings.

*Thomas Mss*

TO MESSRS. CATERS.

Paris, March 15th, 1781.

GENTLEMEN,—I embrace with pleasure the present opportunity of introducing the bearer, Mr. Hazelhurst, to you. He is a merchant of Philadelphia, and visits your country to view your manufactures, and for the purposes of commerce, in which he has for many years been reputably established in America. As he is but lately from that country, he is able to give you the best intelligence of the state of it; and being about to send out goods, I doubt not that your acquaintance with each other will prove mutually beneficial and agreeable. I have the honor to be, with the most sincere respect, Gentlemen,

Yours, &c.,  
S. DEANE.

Messrs. Caters,  
Merchants, Ghent.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN JAY.

Paris, March 26th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received your favors of the 10th, and thank you for the promise of a continuation, though I wish either of us had more agreeable subjects to write on. I wish to God we could have twenty-four hours only together. I think we should hardly close our eyes during the time, and that I could convince you of many things more important than the subject on which you closed your last, and which would surprise you. But what avails it to make wishes for what cannot happen.

The British fleet sailed the 13th, and our next news will probably be from your quarter. The taking of St. Eustatia, and the immense plunder made there by Rodney on the Dutch, as well as on France and America, you will have at large in the Gazettes of London. It may be exaggerated as some give out,

but from my knowledge of the state of trade there, I have reason to believe the amount given but too near the truth. The ship *Marquis de Lafayette*, with the clothing and supplies for our army, is still at L'Orient, and will probably remain there for a month to come; at least it is said that she missed of her convoy to Brest, and that two hundred of her seamen have been taken to man the fleet. I know not the truth of this, but it was creditably reported to me yesterday, on which I conclude that it will require a month at least for her to get ready and to obtain a fresh convoy. I fear this will add to our disappointments in America.

Mr. Dana is appointed to go to Russia, and I am told that he sets out this week. Mr. Laurens, Junr., has been here about a week. He arrived in the *Alliance*. He has been every day at Court, and lodging at Passy. I have not seen him, but, from his going so constantly to Court, hope he has prospects of success. I hear that he designs to return in about a month.

Our last advices from America, are of the 15th, ultimo from Boston, when nothing material had happened since Arnold's expedition to Richmond. The New England States were laying heavy taxes, and exerting their utmost to fill up their complement of the army, which is a favorable symptom. I shall probably make a second tour to Holland, and still farther northward in a few weeks, but hope for several of your letters in the mean time, and am with real esteem and friendship, Dear Sir,

Your most obedt. and very humble servant,

S. DEANE.

Hon. John Jay, Esq.,

*Jay Mss.*

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FROM JOHN JAY.

Madrid, March 28th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—My last to you was of the 10th, inst., and I concluded it with a promise of a continuation,

which I now set down to perform. The more I enquire and hear about your contract, the more I become convinced that it will never be ratified. The prices affixed to the several articles are thought exorbitant, and I am well persuaded that the conduct of those affairs will be referred to the person I before alluded to.

Mr. Carmichael has been informed (I believe by letter from some person in France) that you had, in some late conversations on American affairs, spoken much to their disadvantage and in a manner very discouraging. I mention this that, if the report be ill founded, I may desire him to undeceive his correspondent. You must be sensible that such reports will be no less prejudicial to you in America than in Europe.

Your reasons for not publishing your defence at present do you honor. Let me advise you, however, to omit no opportunity of authenticating the facts essential to it, and to hold yourself constantly in readiness to seize the first proper opportunity of convincing the world that you merit the thanks, not the reproaches, of your country. The duplicity of which you complain, if well founded, is extremely reprehensible, and I think ought, in that case, to be fairly and fully exposed; but as no injustice wounds so deeply as that which may be done to a man's reputation, care should be taken that your proofs be adequate to your assertions. I am the rather led to the remark by the apprehension that your suspicions reach a gentleman in America whom I verily believe incapable of such conduct, and who, I have many reasons to think, really wished you well. If upon any occasion his conduct relative to you should have been wrong, I am confident it must have been under the influence of mistake and misinformation. I mean G[ouverneur] Morris. If you should adopt your former idea of endeavoring to establish your contract by a personal application to this court (which, if soon done, might be worth your while), I shall then have an opportunity of submitting

to your considération the several reasons on which my opinion of that gentleman's rectitude in that business is founded.

I believe you innocent of the malversations imputed to you, and I feel for you all that sympathy which such an opinion must create in every honest mind. Evils of this kind, tho' temporary, are severe, and would be exceedingly so were it not for the prospect of their soon ceasing. In this enlightened age, when the noise of passion and party shall have subsided, the voice of truth will be heard and attended to. It is too true that mere private altercations have little effect upon the public mind, few thinking it worth their while to examine the merits of a dispute important only to the parties. This is not your case; your commission, and the manner in which it was executed, will ever be interesting to Americans, and therefore Americans will always be ready to hear your cause and to determine it justly, that is, according to evidence. Keep your eyes fixed to this object—an ounce of proof is worth a ton of assertions—be unwearied in collecting it. Spare no pains in ascertaining the facts necessary to defend yourself or defeat your enemies. With respect to your defence, it ought, in my opinion, to be written with great perspicuity, and with the utmost temper; that is, the materials should be so arranged and embellished as that the reader may never find himself perplexed in mazes, nor discouraged by mud and dirt; but, on the contrary, easily find the way from the beginning to the end. And the more agreeable and entertaining it may be, the more he will be pleased with it, and consequently with you. With respect to temper, the caution extends beyond the language, in which, however, I would not have a single hard word; and for this very good reason, that I never knew an instance in which they did any good, but many in which they did much harm. As to hard things, they respect facts and remarks as to the first, and know of but one rule. It is never to omit publishing a fact (if



capable of proof) against your enemy, provided it be essential to your vindication against his charges, and no honorary obligation forbid it; and on the other hand, to beware publishing any anecdotes either so trivial in themselves, or so little connected with your defence, as to be imputable to malice.

I have known defences fail from various causes; want of temper, negligence, too little delicacy with respect to some persons and things, and too much with respect to others, were the common causes. You have time, and, I presume, materials enough to render yours perfect in its kind; nay, you may easily render it not only interesting for the present, but forever; and were I in your place I would so connect and interweave the important affairs of your agency with it, as that it should live as long as they may be deemed important, which, in my opinion, will never cease to be the case. In a word, you may, if you please, build your own monument, and inscribe upon it incontestible evidence of your merit. Think a little of this matter, and tell me how you like the idea.

Adieu for the present; you shall hear from me again soon.

I am, dear Sir, with great truth and sincerity, your Friend and Servant,

JOHN JAY.

The reason why I think if you mean to come this way, you had better do it *soon*, is that you may see Miralles successor, with whom more may perhaps be done by a timely interview than any other method.

Silas Deane, Esq.

*Jay Mss.*

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TO JOHN JAY.

Paris, April 8th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—My last was of the 26th, ultimo, and I this day received yours of the 28th. I assure you that I never had any suspicion of Mr. G[ouverneur]

Morris' acting with duplicity toward me, and am surprised that any thing in my letters should give you such an idea. Be assured, if ever I bring the charge publicly against any one, I shall produce incontestable evidence. At present the same reasons which forbid my publishing at all, stand in the way of my saying anything, except to my most intimate friends. I am glad to find that the motives for my silence have the same weight with you as they still have with me, and I thank you for communicating to me your general sentiments on the part I ought to act; they agree with my own. As to the objections to the contract, I do not see how, if I were present, they would be removed, as the prices agreed for are lower than what England has ever given, and precisely what France has contracted for in Peace.

As nothing can be done under the present situation of America toward carrying the contract into execution, a journey on that account would be as fruitless as it must be expensive. You tell me that Mr. Carmichael has been informed by letter from France of my using expressions of a discouraging nature as to American affairs, and of my having spoken to their disadvantage, ect., and tell me that such reports will be no less prejudicial to me in America than in Europe. I have no doubt whence this intelligence comes. If you will believe what some gentlemen have written, and probably will repeat, you must henceforth set me down as a Tory and an enemy to my Country; but neither the ravings of madmen nor the representations of designing ones can alter the nature of things, tho' they may for a time injure an individual.

Too many of our countrymen bring over with them to France all that spirit and violence of party by which they were actuated in America, and think, or at least pretend to think, they can no way so well serve America as by representing everything to be in the most prosperous state. To me it has ever appeared absurd to the last degree for men who are soliciting in the

most pressing manner for assistance, to represent their circumstances to be such that they can do very well without it; yet such has been the strange conduct of too many of the Americans who come over. I arrived in Paris in August last. I took a resolution before I came over never to engage in the public affairs of this or any other country, and nothing has presented here to induce me to alter my determination. I had, however, a difficult part to act, as many questions must be put to me which I knew not how to answer; whilst silence or evasion would cause an unfavorable construction for my country or myself, or both. Thus embarrassed, I avoided going into company as far as I decently could. The Resolutions of the 18th of March had raised a general ferment here, and every one was loud against them, from the Prime Minister down to the citizen.

I was called on often to explain them, and though I have never had but one opinion of the proceeding, which has ever been that it was unjust and impolitic to the last degree, yet I did all in my power to moderate the resentments of those who suffered by those resolutions. It is true I did not justify them, and, like Mr. Adams and some others, say that it was the wisest measure Congress ever took, and that none but rogues and speculators would find fault with it. Mr. Searle arrived at Paris a few weeks after me, direct from Philadelphia, and, it was reported, was charged with some public commission. I never knew nor inquired what it was.

The gentleman asserted upon all occasions that the British forces were actually shut up and perishing by want and disease in Charlestown; that Genl. Washington's army consisted of more than 20,000 effective men, and that far from wanting recruits, more pressed to enroll themselves; that America did not wish for peace until England should be entirely humbled or ruined—until, to use his own words, "that old lion's claws should be cut and his teeth all drawn."

When any one, Frenchman or American, doubted of

these assertions, he was sure to be answered with an air of important contempt. "You will pardon me, good Sir, I am a member of Congress, the only man that ever came over to Europe in that character. I must know. I have been Chairman of most of their Committees. I think I ought at least to know," etc. He asserted that America alone was able to carry on the war, that commerce had injured us, that the merchants of America were, without example, such vile rogues and speculators that it would be happy for America if they were instantly extirpated; that those of France who complained of the depreciation, were meer speculators and pedlars, and that the goods sent out from France had done us more mischief than 40,000 Russians sent out to fight against us could have done; that he wished to God every American sent out to France might be instantly hanged, without exception even of himself, content, he said—a modern Curtius—to suffer among them, since better men would succeed. This is a faint sketch of the man's stile, as extravagant and mad as it must seem to you. There are Americans at Paris that went almost as far.

I could not agree with such men. I wished to remain silent, but, being called upon to give my opinions, and that in such a manner that neither gratitude or duty would admit of a refusal, I did what I trust you and every other honest American would have done, I told the truth. I did not scruple to say that our circumstances were very different, and I gave my opinion as early as November last to the Minister, thro' our mutual friend, that nothing short of money and supplies for our army and a superior fleet could save America, and that without these the American war would soon be brought to a close, or to the most dangerous crisis; for that our finances were totally deranged, our commerce nearly ruined, our naval force next to nothing, and our army suffered for want of pay and clothing, and that instant relief was absolutely necessary. This language I acknowledge to have held,

and if it is discouraging or disadvantageous, I cannot help it. It is the truth, and, in my opinion, the language of sound policy. You must judge whether my stile of conversation or the other was best calculated to promote the interest of our country. Certain, I am, however, that this, and this only, has given rise to the reports propagated and spread in Europe, and, I doubt not, in America.

You have now the whole ground for the report transmitted to Mr. C[armichael.] I have been very particular for your satisfaction, as I apprehend from the stile of your letter that the report has made some impression on your opinion. I would much sooner loose it than sacrifice one syllable of the truth to retain it.

You observed to me in a former letter that you was the servant, not the slave, of Congress, and therefore could bear to hear the truth. Surely I, who am not even their servant, may venture to tell the truth. I do not desire Mr. C[armichael] to try to undeceive his correspondent, as you, out of friendship to me, propose, for I do not believe he wishes to be undeceived himself. But between ourselves, and to go no further, a letter from the first character in America, now before the minister, justifies all, and more than all I ever said or hinted, and fixes the relief of America solely on the point upon which I declared it to depend in November last; viz., money and supplies for our army and a superior naval force, without which, he says, America must soon fall.

Was it inimical for me to declare the same thing five months since, and to do every thing which a private individual could do to persuade the minister of the real wants and dangerous situation of America?

I have, perhaps, already tried you, but must add that I have no personal pique against Mr. Searle or Mr. Dana, or any of those who have set me down as an enemy. I am sensible that their letters or reports or opinions, only as to men and things, though related by others, may have weight at a distance, so as to do

me sensible injury ; therefore it is that I have given you a sample of the general tenor, as well as the ground of them, and you must judge whether their stile or mine was best calculated to serve America. There can be no question which was the most conformable to the true state of our affairs.

As to Mr. S[earle], I most sincerely pity him as a man whose head is turned, or near madness. Dr. Franklin thinks him far gone in it, and I should perhaps be of the same opinion were it not that I am unwilling to give in to the idea that America has employed in its public departments more madmen than almost any other country can produce ; and, therefore, that madness must be epidemical in our country.

The long spell of easterly winds has prevented any arrivals for some time, so that we never have had a greater dearth of news. God grant there may be good on the way, and such as will restore peace. Every one of the contending Powers wants it, and, if I may venture to give my opinion, not one of them will gain anything by a continuance of the war.

My compliments to Mrs. Jay and Col. Livingston, and be assured that I am, with great sincerity,

Your most obedient and very humble. sevt.,

S. DEANE.

P. S.—Mr. Laurens, Junr., is constantly at Versailles. He lodges there. His commission, I am told, is to solicit in the warmest and most pressing manner for the supplies which I before mentioned as indispensably necessary. This, if further proof was wanted, would justify me in having urged the same here six months ago. Mr. Laurens has conducted with great prudence, and I most sincerely wish him success.

[Cipher translated.] The great Character is Washington, who says expressly that the war cannot be kept up this year without money and a fleet superior to the enemy.

His Excellency, John Jay.

*Jay Mss.*

TO MONSIEUR MONPLAISON.

Paris, April 10th, 1781.

SIR,—A box or case of goods marked N. L. No. 15 was sent from hence by the messagerie on the 10th, of January last to your address, to be shipped on board the ship Marquis La Fayette, to care of Mons. Pelletier, second Captain. As no receipt has been returned for it by Mons. P., the owners are uncertain whither it arrived in season or not, and have prayed me to write to you on the subject. I must, therefore, beg you to inform me by the return of the post if it was received and shipped, and that if so, you will inclose Mr. Pelletier's receipt, if he gave any for it. You will pardon my giving you this trouble, as the goods were, one half of them, the property of a poor man who has been in my service for some time.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mons. Monplaison.

(N. B.—Sent duplicates the 23d, and another the 2d May.)

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Paris, April 15th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I take the liberty of inclosing a letter from Mr. Lee, with which I should not trouble you were my present circumstances different from what they are; at any rate, the poor man must be relieved, and I have already promised his landlord that his bill shall be paid. I pray you to return me the inclosed after perusing it. Mr. Lee had, without my direction, applied to Mr. Beaumarchais after he informed me of it. I mentioned his case to Mr. Beaumarchais myself;

that is the gentleman he refers to. I am, with great respect, Dear Sir,

Your most obedt. and Very humble Servt.,

S. DEANE.

His Excellency, Benjamin Franklin, Esqr.

*Holbrooke Mss.*

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To ———.

Paris, April 16th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—As our mutual friend here has wrote you several letters on the subject of our proposed speculation, I shall say nothing further on it in this, than that I am fully resolved to pursue it as far as my stock or credit will go, though I should do it alone, as I am confident that the profits will be more than equal to the risques. This is to solicit your assistance in placing my son in a good school, some where near London, for a year or two. He is now sixteen years of age, and, in consequence of the war, his education has been neglected; he has been three years in France, where, except the language, he has gained but little useful knowledge. He is the only child I have, and am, therefore, solicitous to place him where he may, in two years time, be capable of going to some regular course of business. As he is ingenious, modest, and attentive, I flatter myself he may in that time acquire the necessary rudiments of learning, for I design him for the mercantile line of life. This letter goes by Mr. Walpole, Junr., who returns in about a fortnight, and who will put any letter you send me into my hands; and by that time my son will be ready to set out with Mr. Sebor, by whom I shall write you more at large. I shall send my son as if going only to Brussels, and he will pass to London under a borrowed name, which the present unhappy contest, and the share I have had in it, render necessary. We have no news so late from America as what is in your papers; indeed, I have never



known a greater dearth of intelligence at any time. Pray send us good news, if you can; the best will be that of peace, and the nearer the better.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. [not addressed].

*Thomas Mss.*

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JONATHAN WILLIAMS TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Nantes, April 18th, 1781.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,—It is found absolutely necessary for Mrs. Williams to take a journey and reside some time in a high country in order to re-establish her health. In consequence of this, and in order to produce to you all my accounts and vouchers, I have determined to go to Passy, first leaving Mrs. Williams at St. Germain; she recovered her health, when she was last ill, at that place, and it is therefore the most probable one to succeed a second time. We propose to leave this on the first of next month, and, as we shall travel but very slow, with private horses, it will be about the 10th before we arrive.

When you have seen my accounts I trust you will be satisfied with my conduct, and continue your confidence in me, if there should be any new supplies ordered. Mr. Laurens, I understand, has a particular mission to procure pecuniary aids, and if he succeeds in this I suppose there will be purchases to make. By the connections I have formed, and the offers of service that are made to me from every part of the Kingdom, I am sure I am as able to do the business to advantage as any man whatever. I would, however, recommend that no cloaths of any kind should be made up here. I am convinced that it is very disadvantageous. We do not want taylors in America, and we can please ourselves much better; besides, cloaths made up take up four times the bulk that goods do,

and consequently the difficulty in transporting is four times as great.

When I have the pleasure of seeing you, I will take the liberty of giving you all my ideas on the subject ; in the mean time I beg you will recommend my services to Mr. Laurens, if he has occasion for them.

I travelled with Mr. Payne [Common Sense] from L'Orient hither. I find he is a strong enemy to Mr. D[eane] ; he professes not to be so to you, but, on the contrary, expresses himself respectfully of you. He says, however, he laments that you should be the friend and supporter of Mr. D[eane]. I suspect he is a little of a Leeite, tho' he professes no attachment to him ; but I am sure he is attached to Iz[ard], and they, you know, run in the same line. We agree exceedingly well together, and are growing intimate. I confess I like him as a companion, because he is a pleasant, as well as a sensible, man, and I heartily wish that party had not so good an assistant ; I trust, however, that when he has been a little longer in Europe, and is made acquainted with Lee's rascality, he will, like all other good men, despise the wretch.

I am, with the greatest Respect and Esteem, Dear and hond. Sir, most dutifully and affectionately yours,

JONA. WILLIAMS.

*Holbrooke Mss.*

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TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Paris, May 2d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Grieve will do himself the honor of waiting on you with this, and I take the liberty of assuring you in it, that he has on all occasions been the warm and zealous friend of America, and, determined to make common cause with us, has lately become our fellow citizen. He has an affair with respect to some lands, which I believe lye in your neighbourhood, and in which I hope you will be able to give

him some assistance, by recommending him to some of your friends there. I have, therefore, on this account, as well as from my acquaintance with Mr. Grieve, and my sincere wishes for his success in America, taken the liberty to recommend him to your good offices. I have the honor to be, with the most perfect esteem, Dear General,

Your most obedt. humble Servt.

S. DEANE.

His Excellency General Washington.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Paris, May 2d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—This will be handed to you by Mr. Grieve, who goes to America with the resolution of establishing himself in the United States, whose interests he has (to my knowledge) at all times zealously espoused, and of which he has a few days since qualified himself a citizen. He has an affair of some importance in your State, in the adjustment of which I flatter myself you may be of service to him, and therefore take the liberty of recommending him to your good offices. I have the honor to be, with the most sincere respect, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

His Excellency Gov. Jefferson.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, May 2d, 1781.

DEAR BROTHER,—Mr. Grieve, the bearer of this, may probably arrive in some part of New England; if so, I have prayed him to take my house in his way to Virginia, where he proposes to go, and that he will call on you. He is a stranger in our country,

though at all times its friend, which is, in a word, saying every thing to recommend him to your warmest civilities, and to every service in your power to render him. I am most sincerely yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

B. Deane, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SAMUEL AND J. H. DELAP.

Paris, May 5th, 1781.

DEAR SIRs,—I should have wrote you before this, acknowledging your last of the 6th, of March, but that I expected, from the encouragement given me in that, soon to be favored with a second letter inclosing your accounts. Apprehensive that the multiplicity of your affairs have made you forget or delay that, I must therefore be permitted to remind you of it, and to urge afresh the necessity of having them, in order to close the public accounts of Congress, which you must wish to have done as much as I can desire it. I have waited here several months on those accounts, and am now determined to leave Paris soon, whither closed or not; but to leave them unsettled would prejudice me greatly. I shall probably put off my journey three weeks or a month, and the receipt of your accounts in that time will be extremely agreeable, and of service. I am, with the most sincere Respect and Attachment, Dear Sirs,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. S. & J. H. Delap.

*Thomas Mss.*

FROM JOHN JAY.

Madrid, May 10th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I had yesterday the pleasure of receiving yours of the 23d, ultimo. Much time has elapsed

since the date of my last letter, advising you of the arrival of the papers about which you inquire.

It is true that I have in the interim received several long and agreeable letters from you, and that I have not replied to them. I do not wonder that you thought my silence singular, and I should have thought the same had I been in your situation. These papers were to become the subject of inquiry by a court said to be often influenced by light jealousies and suspicions. I had reason to think that the contract would not be realized because it was made, but only in case it should appear expedient that my applications might have their due weight.

It was necessary that I should neither be suspected of being concerned in it, nor of having any private views to be served by it ; for my being really disinterested would avail little, if contrary suspicion should be entertained. Appearances, though trivial, would then over-balance assurances however honest, and any information or opinion I might give would be received as partial and influenced.

Frequent letters to, and an appearance of an intimate connection with, you were, therefore, to be suspended for the present, and the *utile* to be preferred to the *dulce*. I expected long before, though, to have received a decided answer, but this day I have received none, and I really believe that the whole business will be referred to the successor of Mr. Miralles and adjusted in America. If my conjectures are well founded, you will easily perceive how the affair will terminate. It will depend on the ideas he may there gain, the connections he may form, and the particular objects he may have in view. You may ask, who will be the person? I am not as yet at liberty to say a syllable on this subject. As soon as I am, you shall know. My last conversation with Mr. Galvez about the contract was three days ago. He told me it was still under the consideration of the Minister of Marine, where I suspect it will long continue. I expect to

hear more about it next Wednesday, and should any thing new arrive you shall be immediately informed of it.

I have pressed the necessity of a decision by observing that the season was already far advanced, and that if the contractors were not speedily enabled to proceed they would not be in capacity to furnish supplies so soon as the public exigencies might render it convenient, etc., etc. But you know too much of the manner in which these affairs are often conducted to suppose that things will be done merely because they ought to be done.

What in the world could lead you to conjecture that the subjects of some of your letters were disagreeable to me? How could you imagine that because I am one of the servants of Congress, that therefore inquiries into the propriety of their measures must be offensive to me?

There is, you know, a distinction between a servant and a slave. As to the affairs which concern you personally, I am far from being indifferent. I wish them well and justly settled on your account, and also on the public account.

I wish that the conduct of our rulers may always be worthy of their stations, and that their servants be at no time objects either of improper resentments or capricious partialities. Perhaps you think that while at Philadelphia I should have been less reserved with you on these subjects. When you recollect the situation I was then in, you will not blame that reserve. As a member of Congress, I could neither be your enemy or advocate, and the fact is that I was neither.

Sundry of the delays and acts affecting you appeared to me unnecessary and improper, and on both principles I opposed them, as you may see, by the published journals. The reason which determined my judgement on such of the points relative to you were not personal in any sense. They are still fresh in my

memory. I think them as conclusive now as I did then, and, under similar circumstances, should again give the like votes.

That Congress have used you ill, I admit, tho', perhaps, you and I may differ as to the particular instances. If your information is well founded that certain gentlemen then supported you merely as a matter of political convenience, their conduct was certainly very reprehensible. The letters from France to a member of Congress, to which I believe you allude, I not only heard of, but partially inspected. They were put into my hands to read, but before I had leisure to do more than dip into them here and there, they were called for. I had them long enough, indeed, to have read them through, but the many official letters I was daily obliged to read and write, together with my constant attendance in the House, left me little room for minute attention to papers which I suspected would be read and canvassed in Congress. Whether these letters were ordered to be communicated to you or to Congress, or whether they had or had not been communicated to you, are matters respecting which I have no other knowledge but what your letter conveyed to me. That they were not communicated to Congress, I know, and when told the reasons, thought them good. If I remember right, they were that these papers had already been showed to a great many of the members, whereby a knowledge of their contents had been generally diffused; that, therefore, it could not have been necessary to offer them to Congress as intelligence; and, that being private letters, such a step, unsolicited, might have been imputed more to a desire of scourging individuals than of informing the House, especially considering how the gentleman who had those letters was then circumstanced with respect to the persons affected by them. I supposed, indeed, that his own discretion had been his only guide as to the use of those letters, for there can be no doubt but that if he had express directions to communicate them to you

or to Congress, or to others, he ought to have done it.

To be continued.

I am, Sir, Very Sincerely Yours,

JOHN JAY.

To Silas Deane, Esq.

*Jay Mss.*

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TO JAMES WILSON.\*

Paris, May 10th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—A Gentleman lately here from America assured me that it was considered by our countrymen as political heresy or treason to entertain a doubt that France would, under any circumstances whatever, give up our independency by withdrawing from its alliance with us. This way of thinking reflects honour on my countrymen, as it must proceed from their resolution to support inviolably and at all events their own engagements ; but too much confidence proves fatal to nations oftener than too little, and it is not unseasonable for them to review what has so frequently happened in Europe under circumstances similar to the present, and reflect on those instructive lessons which the history of the last two centuries lays before us. What nation in Europe has not during that period broken their most solemn treaties and deserted their allies as often as state necessity or public interest and safety dictated the measure ? I declare I know of none. England (and until lately we joined them in it) has always been very free in censuring the court and people of France as the most perfidious of any in Europe ; France has retorted the charge, though to her honour she has generally done it in a more decent language ; but shall we not be found equally in the wrong, if at this time we think, speak, and act in the opposite extreme from that in which we acted formerly ? On an impartial review of

\* One of the intercepted letters ; see *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.



the past and examination of the present, I confess I think we shall ; and if we eventually become the dupes, and are sacrificed by our unsuspecting confidence, the political world will judge, at least, that we were rather too young and unexperienced for the great affairs we engaged in. The style of Congress appeared to me, I confess, a little too strong and presumptuous when, in September, 1779, they declared that the independence of America was as fixed as fate ; this was, in a religious view, bidding defiance to Omnipotence, and placing our independence on a basis which no civil government or human system ever yet could boast of. Since my return to Europe I have had leisure to take a calm and unprejudiced view of our situation, and however confident you may be in America, I can but have the most distressing apprehensions for our future peace, liberty, and safety ; not that I have more reason to distrust the good faith of France than that of any other nation under similar circumstances, but I have every reason to doubt of the favourable issue of the war ; and if it should be unfavourable, France has already declared to the world the part it will take with regard to our independence. I will explain myself. When Spain offered to mediate, England insisted on France's withdrawing the rescript of the 13th, March, 1778 (which acknowledged our independence as preliminary to any treaty). France replied that it was unreasonable in England to require that at the beginning of a war (the events of which were uncertain) which could only be complied with at the close of an unsuccessful war. This reply needs no comment. The war, though not greatly unsuccessful hitherto on the part of France, has been very far from being successful. France is at this time a great loser on the whole ; but whilst the high style of England embroils that nation with other Powers, and so long as we find employ for near one half its forces, France will continue the war, and encourage us by temporary and partial supplies and most liberal promises. But a storm is gathering on

the continent of Europe, and how soon it will burst, God, who views the hearts of all men (the Emperor's not excepted), only knows; but the moment it begins we must bid adieu to every hope of aid from Europe. The storm which we have been for six years tossed by does not abate; and if we have any skilful pilots on board they must see Scylla on one side and Charybdis on the other, and that unless we make a safe port immediately, we must be shipwreck'd on the one or the other, and increase the list of those unhappy people who, in every age, have been sacrificed, under the appearance of friendship and assistance, to ambition and interest. With our country ravaged and exhausted, without any effectual aid, or perhaps any at all, from our Ally, what have we a right to expect in the end (if we continue to reject with contempt and insult every offer of peace) but unconditional submission? Will France in no case do at this time what they have repeatedly done heretofore? I mean not to cast the least reflection by referring to any particular instance; what I have already said of nations in general will clear me of having such intention. But we ought to recall to our minds how often the people of Scotland, since the beginning of this century, have been encouraged to rise in claim of their supposed rights, and of those of the House of Stuart; stores, troops, ships, and money have been sent to their aid; the consequences are too well known to need repeating. At the close of a war, not very unsuccessful on the part of France, they were given up, and their Prince Charles Edward, though he, as well as his ancestors, had received as solemn promises from France to be re-established on the throne of England as we can pretend to have for independency, was ordered to quit the kingdom; and on refusal was publicly seized on, and bound like a common felon, in the streets of Paris, and forcibly carried off. The interest of the nation was the plea which justified the measure, and may not the same again have equal force? At least our situation calls

for serious reflection. We may at this time obtain all and more than we first claimed ; and, improving the present moment, I will venture to say, more than we can ever expect under any other probable, or almost possible, circumstances. But there is a treaty, and our public and national honor and character are pledged. But if France, to whom it is pledged, trifles with us, if unable or unwilling to assist us effectually, or if, to serve its own views, it leaves us to wear out the force of its hereditary enemy by our destruction, are we holden to support our honour, pledged in treaty, at such an expence ? The universal maxim of all nations, *Salus Populi, suprema lex*, will in such case have no weight with us ; persevering, we may possibly, though not probably, effect with others the ruin of Great-Britain ; but if we and our country must be involved and crushed by the fall of that paternal edifice, in which we once took shelter, and in the beauty and grandeur of which we once placed our greatest pride and security, shall we act the parts of patriots or madmen ? I know not how you will relish these reflections, but I cannot forbear making them, so long as I can neither forget my country or cease to be anxious for its peace, liberty, and happiness. I wrote you a few days since on private affairs, by the way of L'Orient ; I will therefore close this by assuring you that nothing personal, though I have suffered more injustice than almost any man of my time, has had the least influence on my mind as to our general interests. I have done much towards promoting a separation from Great-Britain and for independency. I acted from a sincere belief that it would soon and certainly be effected, and that it would tend to our happiness and peace ; I now see no prospect of its being obtained, and am fully convinced that the irreparable mischiefs we have already suffered and must suffer, with the temper and disposition of my countrymen, are such that independency must prove a curse rather than a blessing to us. From this persuasion I have written

freely to many of my friends. Few men, not natives of France, have juster or more favorable ideas of the nation than I have, and shall ever entertain; nor shall I ever be wanting in personal gratitude for the many civilities and favors I have received from men in place and out; but these ought and have not any influence on my mind when the true interests of my country are in question. I know, personally, but one of the ministers; I esteem and respect him as much as any man can do; but if I dared to intrude so far as to hint my opinion to him, it should be not to pursue the war another moment on account of our independence, nor to hazard any thing for an object which will never prove of that advantage to France in its commercial interests which I once thought it would, if, indeed, it can prove of any at all. But I have tired you with the length of this letter; I will therefore close with assuring you I am, with sincere esteem and unalterable friendship, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble Servant,  
SILAS DEANE.

My compliments to Mrs. Wilson.

P. S.—When I query whether the independency of America will prove of so great advantage to France as was once imagined, I confine myself to advantages merely of a commercial nature, to be derived from us in that state. If France by our assistance succeed so far as to ruin the commerce and marine of Great Britain, and if we, in the course of effecting this, become reduced to be in effect dependant on France, there can be no question but that we shall be of advantage to France; but such a supposition destroys every idea of real independency.

To the Honourable James Wilson, Esq., at Philadelphia.

*The Royal Gazette, Nov. 21, 1781.*

TO JAMES WILSON.

Paris, May 11th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—You will receive herewith a letter and papers from my friend Mr. Walpole. He has shewn me the contents. I need not, therefore, say any thing more than that if you can serve him you will oblige me every way, both in point of interest as well as friendship. The last time I saw Mr. Gerard, he told me that your affair was agreed to, and that the papers would soon be made out and sent you. I hope this is already done. He is now at Strasburg, and will return in a few days; immediately after which I shall wait on him again on the subject. The situation of affairs in America have been such ever since my arrival that nothing could be done with regard to the Illinois, or any other lands in America. I wrote to Col. Duer, before I left Virginia, that as there appeared but little prospect of obtaining convoys, it was my opinion to desist from further expences for the present. I am sorry my advice was not attended to; no convoy could or can be obtained either here or in Spain. Mr. Jay writes me that he can obtain no answer to the contract which he gave the Minister, nor can we, I think, rely on or expect that Court will pay us greater attentions than they pay our country. In fact, they appear disposed to know nothing of us either in public or private.

The contract with France is not in a much better situation. It was accepted of, but conditionally only. When I urge any thing here it is naturally replied, that when the cargoes arrive and are approved of it will be time enough to finish the contract without convoy, and none can be obtained. No cargoes can be brought over, even if they could be procured in America. Thus, to all appearance, this is like to be suspended during the war. The embarrassment in which I found a certain gentleman on whom I depended here, has hurt me in this affair, as well as in some others, exceed-

ingly. In short, I despair of doing any thing in this affair, or in the land way, so long as the war continues and is so unfavorable to us, and I am sorry to tell you that I see no probable grounds to hope for a speedy end of our troubles. All parties in England appear unanimous in one point, which is, on no consideration whatever to give up our dependence on the British Empire in some form or other. A large reinforcement is gone for New York or Virginia, and a still larger is preparing, and will probably sail sometime in the next month. Holland has not as yet made any reprisals. Many secret negociations are on foot with the Emperor of Germany, with Russia, &c., the result of which it is needless to conjecture about at present, since in a short time the whole must be known. There is no probability of any thing decisive this campaign, unless it be with you, and of this you are the best judge.

The Americans in general who arrived here give strange and contradictory accounts of our situation, and too many of them act as strange a part on their arrival. They carry party matters as high here as ever you carried them in America, at least they are disposed to do so. Fortunately, I am in a city where the guards and marachassee patrol the streets at all hours. Otherways I might possibly be put in the situation in which you once was. In a word, the man who will not give up his right of private judgement is sure to be set down as an enemy by these men; and, having some obstinacy in my disposition as to certain points, you must not be surprized if you hear me announced as an enemy, a British partizan, and a Tory. I regard these epithets as words, of course, and hold the authors in too contemptible a light to give me a moment's uneasiness simply on their account; but I have seen (and I now reflect with pain on it) the weight which intelligence from this side the water, however ill founded and incredible, has ever had with my countrymen. I forsee the injurious consequences

it must have with respect to myself, but a cool, reflecting hour must arrive sooner or later, and to that I patiently refer my cause. Mr. Laurens will be able to give you an account of the disposition of this Court. I am told—for I do not meddle with public affairs—that it is good. He has, so far as has come to my knowledge, conducted with prudence and firmness, has attached himself to no party, but devoted himself to the object of his mission, in which, I hope his success may meet with grateful acknowledgments. I have now been waiting six months, with my accounts ready for being audited, but can get no auditor, Mr. Johnson refusing to act. He informed Congress a year past of his refusal, yet they have not appointed any new one, and I am refused even money for my expence. You never informed me whither you received my cypher; I therefore can hardly dare to write to you in it, but if the following should be unintelligible, the loss will not be great. [Cipher translated. Our affairs are in a bad way. Adams is become unpopular in France, both through his friends and his actions. He has retired. Spain is, at the bottom, the enemy of our independence; Holland the same. The councils of France are weak and uncertain. One point is only in view, and the way is to win England at our expence. None pursue it with decision. Without it our cause will be ruined.] Mr. Searle is in Holland. That gentleman arrived soon after me, charged, as I have been told, with a public commission from Pennsylvania. He declared, on his arrival here, that Gen. Washington's army consisted of near thirty thousand men engaged for the war; that Lord Cornwallis was shut up in Charlestown; that there was no difficulty in recruiting the army; on the contrary, that men pressed to enroll themselves; that America was never more unanimous, did not wish for peace on other terms than the total ruin of England; that our merchants did us infinite mischief and deserved all of them to be hanged; that the goods sent over from France had done us more

injury than forty thousand Russians could have done fighting against us in our country, &c. This was strange language. You will hardly conceive it possible for a man in his senses to be guilty of such extravagance; but I assure you this was his common stile. When a stranger doubted of the truth of it, Mr. Searle told him: "Sir, I am a Member of Congress, have been Chairman of most of their Committees. I am the only Member of Congress ever in Europe. As such, surely I must know." When an American doubted or contradicted those assertions, he was immediately set down as a Tory, an enemy to his country; and thus, for attempting to prevent imposition on our friends here, an imposition injurious to our true interests, I have been marked out and described as an enemy. I have freely and openly declared that without a superior fleet and money and supplies for our army, the affairs of America must be ruined. This I told the Minister at first, and this I have, when obliged to do it, given as my opinion.

The events of the war and our present situation shew that my opinion was not ill founded. Was it a friendly part to tell the truth, and shew the necessity of aid, or was it not? For me, I thought, and still think, that those men who represent America as in want of scarce any thing, and unanimous and victorious, whatever their intentions may be, act an unfriendly part. I leave you to judge. I wish to God you and a few of our friends could have looked into Paris for half an hour, and seen a man strutting about in his uniform, with two enormous epaulets, and a green ribbon with a black and white cockade, and the gentlemen and ladies in the public walks staring at him, and inquiring what foreign general officer that must be. I think you must have been diverted. Scarce any French officer, in circumstances to put on other cloaths, ever wears his uniform, except when on immediate duty; but our militia officers on their arrival in France put on the most showy ones they can get,



which leads to inquiries, the result of which is not always favorable. Some of the Americans, and I may say the most of them here, were as extravagant in their stile, and equally violent against all who presumed to differ from them; thus Doctor Bancroft, myself, and some others have been marked out by them, and Doctor Franklin fares still worse in their conversations. They have of late avoided his house, and have abused him in all their private companies in the most outrageous manner. As it is not improbable that their letters to America will be in the same stile, I have troubled you with the above state of their conduct, not that I have so little confidence in your good opinion of me as to think you will readily believe the reports sent over. I shall write to you again in a few days; in the meantime I am, with great Esteem and Friendship,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

J. Wilson, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Paris, May 13th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I should have done myself the honor of waiting on you before this time, but was told that you was gone on a journey for some time. I now take the liberty of requesting that you would inform me if you shall be at Versailles through the week, and what day it will be most agreeable to you for me to wait on you. I want to confer with you on the subject of the Illinois lands and on Mr. Wilson's affairs.

I have the honor to be &c., &c.

S. DEANE.

Mr. Gerard.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SAMUEL H. PARSONS.\*

Paris, May 14th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have not had the pleasure of any letters from you since my leaving America, so that though I have written several, am uncertain of any of them coming to your hand. You doubtless must be as desirous to know the true state of affairs on this side the water, as I am to know how things really are on yours. The few letters I have received have been too short, and written with too much caution, to give me the information I wish for, and the Americans who arrive, run into such extremes that I know not what to depend on. But a few weeks before the news of the defeat of Gen. Gates in Carolina, we were told by Mr. Searle, who arrived directly from Philadelphia, that the British were shut up, and in a manner besieged in Charles-town, that General Washington's army consisted of more than 20,000 men, &c. ; others gave an account very different. In short, nothing can be more contradictory than the accounts given by the different persons who arrive in France, of the state of affairs in America. I wish you could find time and a safe opportunity to send me the truth, and the whole truth ; I assure you it would be of service, and tend to prevent the mischiefs which flow from false and exaggerated accounts transmitted from America, and which are repaid with interest in the account sent back to you of the state of affairs in Europe. The writers and relaters of false accounts on both sides the water have done us infinite mischief. The war itself was occasioned at first more by them than by any other, or perhaps every other, cause taken together, and the continuance of it has been equally owing to them ; and in the beginning of the contest, the friends of the British Ministry in America assured them that America would not persevere in its opposition, and

\* One of the intercepted letters, see *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.

our agents and correspondents in London encouraged us by assuring us that the majority of the nation was in our favour ; that Government would not go to extremities ; that Parliament would and must recede, for that the nation was unable to make war and to support it for any time. Thus false representations on both sides laid the foundation for the scenes which succeeded, and in which we are still involved ; and a continuation of the same kind of wrong and groundless information has kept up the action of this great tragedy of errors. You have found so many of the accounts transmitted you from Europe to have been groundless, and so many of the flattering encouragements and promises made you disappear and vanish into air, their original composition, that I presume you would now bear to hear the truth at large, if I dared to send it you ; and though it is hardly safe for me to do it, I dare not send you any thing else. Great Britain is neither exhausted nor dispirited, as you have been taught to believe ; the Parliament appear more unanimous and resolved in the prosecution of the war than at any former period ; and the warmest opposers of the Minister unite with him in refusing to accede to the independence of America. The British fleet is evidently superior at sea to that of our ally, and the former are preparing to augment it by more than thirty new ships of the line, and near forty frigates, actually on the stocks. The late subscription to the new loan shews that money is not wanted, tho' the national debt has become immense ; this is their situation. The state of our friends has been as greatly misrepresented in America as that of our enemies. I will not enter into particulars, but I think you cannot rely on either men or ships from hence, until very late in this season, if at all. Mons. de Grasse has sailed with about twenty sail of the line for the West-Indies, from whence, it is said, he is ordered to America ; but as Admiral Rodney has a fleet nearly equal in force in the islands, I see

no prospect of any thing decisive. Should such a manœuvre be made, and should it take place, the French fleet cannot be with you before August, or later, and in these seas the maritime force of contending powers appear too nearly balanced to expect any thing of importance from them this Summer. I am fully of opinion, however, that England enters on this campaign with greater advantage than it has began any one since France joined in the war; and if they succeed in bringing the Emperor of Germany to interpose in their favour, I think the balance will be decidedly on their side. This will be known in a very short time, possibly before I send this letter. Our first object of the war was the repeal of those acts of parliament which were injurious to our rights and privileges; before this repeal was obtained, we were forced to declare independency, and solicit an alliance with France, the hereditary enemy of England. By a fortunate turn of our affairs, France was brought into an alliance with us, and to guaranty our independence. Just at this time the Parliament of England repealed the obnoxious acts; this changed entirely the object of the war on our part, as well as on that of England. It was no longer for the redress of grievances, but for sovereignty that we fought. At the time in which France came into a treaty of alliance with us, their object was to separate America for ever from England, and thereby to weaken effectually a power which for centuries past had given them more uneasiness, and stood more in their way, than any other power in Europe. From appearances they judged that by a sudden declaration and vigorous exertions the point would be gained in a very short time, and at little expence either in men or money; that England would be brought to consent to the independence of America; after which every thing else would follow, of course, and in its proper time. But the first stroke failed, the favourable moment was lost, and all the preparations which had been made for im-

proving it, served only to shew England the danger it had been in, and to rouse the spirit of the nation to make the most vigorous exertions. From this period the object of the war became almost as much changed with France as it had before been changed in America. At first it was by a sudden stroke to force England to acknowledge our independence and separation from their empire, which being done, peace must have followed, and time would have soon effected the rest; but this failing, the original object was changed, or, rather, it was thought best to obtain it by taking a different line of conduct. England was loaded with debt, and was violently agitated by parties; the opposition to Ministers in Parliament and out, was formidable, and appeared more so than it really was, from the English freedom of speech in Parliament, and of publications out of it. America was not perfectly unanimous in any of its measures, except in the support generally of their independency; in this they appeared sufficiently unanimous to prevent any fear of them falling off or accommodating. Therefore what could not be gained in one way, was to be attempted in another. The weakening of England was the primary and constant object, but the means for doing this were changed. It was, as I have already said at first, to be done by our being immediately established in independency, and the consequences which time would naturally produce, would effect everything desired; but this failing, through the same ostensible object, that of our independence has been held up to view, yet measures so very different have been pursued, that their first object, so far as it respects us, has become entirely changed, and the plan now is, as far as we can judge by appearance, to weaken England by spinning out the war, and of employing us against them; and after England is reduced by these means, our independence may possibly be established. I need not point out to a man of your superior penetration, the fatal mischiefs with which such a system is preg-

nant. Whilst England is at war with France and Spain united, we are left with more than one half of its land forces, and a considerable part of its marine on us. We may struggle hard, and behave manfully, but must be continually losing ground and strength, whilst France, our ally with Spain, may possibly hold a balance to the rest, without any material injury to themselves, though the fact is, they have not done even this hitherto. But supposing that England, in consequence of such a system, should, in two or three years, be reduced to receive the law from France and Spain, in what situation must America by that time be? And to what power can we look for relief, if France or Spain, or both, should offer to dictate the laws to us? Though this may not be the case, yet nothing is more evident than that the present object of France and Spain is to employ and waste the forces of Britain at the expence of America. Evident as this must be to every one who impartially reviews the past, and compares it with the present, we are unwilling to see or believe it, and are prevented from the examination by fair promises, generous professions, and just so much and no more assistance as will serve us to keep from sinking at once, or flying off to the other side. In the mean time you must observe that Spain has, from the first, refused to know any thing of us, thereby holding it in its power to declare for or against us, or to insist on any conditions, whatever an interest may dictate, whilst America is bound by a secret article of the treaty of Paris, of Feb. 6, 1778, to make a similar one with Spain, whenever required; yet, though this article was obtained from the American Commissioners at the signing of the treaty at Paris, and though Spain has been now for two years engaged in the war, yet that Court still refuses to acknowledge us, or to receive our Ambassador, through the President of Congress. I will not enter further on the important, and, to me, painful, subject. I have already said enough to a man of your penetration and judg-

ment, and have no need to go into a particular and minute discussion. I will therefore finish my letter on more private matters. You must recollect the many and long conversations we had on the subject of a settlement on the Mississippi, near the Illinois, or on some other part of that fertile western country. When I left America I intended to have made some attempt, at least, to interest some gentlemen in Europe in the scheme, but the unfavourable appearance of American affairs, and the uncertainty how the war may terminate, have prevented me from saying any thing on the subject. I have not, however, lost sight of it; and if you continue in the same sentiments as formerly, it will be well to turn your thoughts that way. I can see no prospect of our being so happy, or of doing something to repair the injuries we have done ourselves and families in point of fortune, anywhere, as by such an establishment. If we return to our dependence on Great Britain, it will not probably be with unanimity; and parties, animosities, and bickerings between the different governments, and even between individuals, will probably exist longer than we shall, and render the remainder of our lives disagreeable. On the other hand, if our independence is established, the jarring interests of the different states will be such, and so many grounds for disputes are already laid, that we shall be happy even to escape for any time the going into a civil war among ourselves. By retiring westward, which we may do, let the event of the war turn either way, we may escape those disagreeable scenes which await our country, and enjoy more satisfaction, as well as find our account much better, in settling a new colony than in mixing in the feuds and factions of old ones, if, indeed, the report is true that Congress have offered to cede Louisiana and the navigation of the Mississippi exclusively to Spain. I confess I know not how this can be done, if they accept of it, and America becomes independent on such cruel terms; but I can hardly conceive it possible that such

an idea could have entered the head of the weakest and maddest of our politicians. I cannot expect that you can have leisure to send me any digested plan on this subject, but I pray you not to be sparing of general hints, of the grounds and principles on which you would wish to have one formed; and when you write, send duplicates, that some one may reach me. Address your letters under cover to Doctor Franklin, who will know where to forward them. I have nearly finished a third sheet, and have not the courage to enter on a fourth; though in writing to you, I enjoy in some degree the pleasure of conversing with you, of which you know I am not easily tired. But I shall write again in a few days, and in the mean time wishing you all which one friend can wish or desire for another, I am most sincerely, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

Samuel H. Parsons, Esq., Brigadier-General in the service of the United States America.

*The Royal Gazette, Nov. 3, 1781.*

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, May 14th, 1781.

DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote you by the ship Marquis la Fayette, and addressed to your disposal a box marked N. L. No. 15, on account of La Farque. By mistake, that box was shipped among the articles sent out to the Marquis La Fayette. I therefore inclose to you a certificate of the valet-de-chambre of the Marquis, declaring the goods to belong to L'Farque, by which you will be able to recover them, and dispose of them as before directed. The ship must have arrived sometime since. If the Marquis, on the supposition of the box belonging to him, has disposed of its contents, pray get the net proceeds immediately re-



mitted, as was directed in my letter, by the said ship. I shall write you on other subjects in a separate letter. Only two of yours have come to my hand; one of July last, dated at New London, the other of December. Pray write me by every opportunity. Wishing you peace and prosperity,

I am Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. B. Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN NESBITT.

Paris, May 14th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Inclosed you have a letter from our mutual friend Mr. Hazlehurst to me. The letter which he put into the post office here I have taken out, and sent on to him; that written at L'Orient must be still in that office. I pray you to oblige him by inquiring for it, and either send it on to him or get it franked and sent on to London. You will be pleased to advise Mr. Hazlehurst or myself if you find the letter or not; also, to let me know if you have any safe opportunity for sending to America. I am, with much Esteem,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Please to return me Mr. Hazlehurst's letter.

Mr. Jonathan Nesbitt.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ISAAC HAZLEHURST.

Paris, May 14th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I sent on the letter which you put into the office here, by this day's post, and have wrote to Mr. Nesbitt to enquire for the other and to send it on

to you, or to get it franked and sent on for London to its address. I have no doubt but that he will recover it, as the offices are very regular; but they send no letters for London without their being franked. By late letters from America, it appears that there had been an action between Lord Cornwallis and General Greene, near Guilford court house in North Carolina, on the 15th March, and that the latter retreated; but we have no particulars. Twenty-two ships, laden with the spoils of St. Eustatia, have been captured by Monsr. Le Motte de Piquet, and are arrived in France; thus the robbers have been robbed in their turn. I shall probably see you in Amsterdam, if you make any stay there; meantime, be so good as to write to me. I am, with much esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c., S. DEANE.

P. S.—I gave a receipt for the letter; you need only acknowledge its coming to hand, there being no need of a formal receipt from you.

Mr. Hazlehurst, Amsterdam.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, May 14th, 1781.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I received yours of the 15th. Feb. last, dated at Williamsburg. It relieved me in part from the extreme anxiety I have some time been under on your account. Were we under any other than our actual unhappy circumstances, it would indeed be surprizing that of the many letters I have sent forward one only has reached you. I am satisfied they have not, all of them, been intercepted by the enemy. I wish you had been more particular as to the state of affairs in Virginia. You leave me uncertain whither the affair of the Soucy is actually settled

and closed, or only in the way of it, by reference to Mr. B. Harrison, Jr. We have been told here that Arnold has been at Williamsburg, but you say nothing of it. You are, however, right in your conjecture that the whole force of the enemy will be turned on your quarter; considerable reinforcements are gone and going over. The Fier Roderique is condemned, and Mr. De Franci has gone to his native province for the recovery of his health. If any thing can be more surprising than our wanton breach of faith in almost every contract we have made, it is our belief that we can still obtain a credit. You tell me that all new hazards are forced from you, save broken reeds. I need say no more of them. As to what Arthur Lee may say or publish, I am become very indifferent. Other matters press harder on me. The situation of my country is such that it bears down every other consideration; nor do I think my countrymen will find leisure at present to attend to his calumnies or my refutation of them. I shall, therefore, continue silent, as much out of respect to them as myself. Your misfortunes are great; mine are no less so. Williams has deceived me beyond any thing I could have conceived of. He has nearly ruined himself, as well as me; and my friend the Doctor [Bancroft] has thrown every thing overboard in his adventures. Mr. Johnson refuses to act as auditor of accounts, and Congress neglect the appointment of any other, and at the same time refuse payment; in short, I have little prospect of doing any thing to any purpose. I was at Amsterdam last winter, and examined the mills you speak of. The construction is extremely simple, and they may be built by any ingenious millwright. I have viewed other useful machines which would answer well in America, in Virginia in particular; but war has banished all useful improvements, and were it not that the rest of the world are enlightened, the next age in America would be dark and barbarous. The loss of seven or eight years' education of youth, the loss of all principle, of public

or private justice, and a general licentiousness of manners, exceed what any one can calculate, and are dreadful presages of what we are to expect, whither independant or not. If the former, we shall be prepared for the most terrible feuds and civil wars among ourselves; if the latter, for slavery, if it be the interest of the victorious to use us in that way. But I will turn from the gloomy prospect. I shall go again for Holland in three or four weeks, and shall take my son along with me to fix him in some good house. As to news, it is needless to say any thing. You have papers which tell you all and much more than happens; but this much I must tell you, there is no prospect of peace this year. England is determined not to assent to our independance under any circumstance whatever, and rises in the stile of speaking and acting as its enemies increase. The Dutch have as yet made no reprisals, nor sent a ship to sea; it is said they are preparing, but they move slow. England has 36 sail of the line, from 64 to 100 guns on the stocks, and forty frigates and sloops of war from 50 guns down. Their privateers are numerous, supposed above three hundred. The plunder of St. Eustatia, by the strange events of war, has arrived in France, Mr. Le Motte Piquet having taken upwards of twenty sail of ships, returning with the spoils of that unhappy island. I pray you to present my compliments to all friends, in particular to Col. Harrison, for whose losses I am sincerely affected. God grant us peace. I cannot turn my face towards you with any other wish, nor can I think of returning until it arrives. We have often talked of the Dismal Swamp. Pray inquire who the proprietors are, and what is their title; also, at what price they estimate it. A good speculation may be made that way when peace takes place. I shall procure models of the mills; but there is no advantage in sending them over under our present circumstances. Mr. Williams arrived here a few days since. I shall get from him what you request. I am wishing you

better fortune than your late. I remain, my Dear  
Brother,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

[Cipher translated.] You say the credit of Congress is like their notes. It is still worse in France. In short, all will soon be at an end with war. Peace only can save us from absolute ruin. Independence is now out of the question, whatever you may think. England is superior to all its opponents, or, at least, equal.

Barnabas Deane, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, May 15th, 1781.

SIR,—On my arriving in France I applied to Mr. Johnson to appoint a time for examining my accounts and vouchers, which I told him would soon be ready. He informed me that he had determined not to accept the appointment, and that he had informed Congress of his resolution some time before. Though this was a severe disappointment to me, yet I flattered myself that Congress would not delay the naming some other to the office, and in this hope I came to Paris in August last and entered on the adjustment of my accounts, which have been for many months ready for settlement, yet, to my extreme mortification, can not get them closed for want of an auditor, or person empowered by Congress to examine them.

I pray Congress would candidly review the circumstances I have been under from my leaving France in April, 1778, to this time. After having to that time faithfully and successfully served them, I was, in obedience to their orders, obliged to make a voyage to America, and to wait their pleasure in Philadelphia for more than a year, unable to obtain their decision on my conduct, though it was almost daily solicited

by me ; the only objection made was, that my accounts remained unsettled. As soon as Congress appointed an auditor to examine them I set out on my voyage to Europe, regardless of danger or expense, fondly hoping that at last I should be able to close my accounts and to receive the balance due to me, but what was infinitely more important, to vindicate my injured character. The expenses of my voyage were great, and of ten months' attendance here have been still greater, and though there is evidently a large balance in my favor, I have been refused money for my support. I have never asked of Congress anything but common justice in the payment of my just demands, out of which I have now been kept for three years. My necessities would long since have justified my seizing on the public property here to the amount of the money due to me ; but I have been withheld from doing it on account of my regard for the credit of my country, and have rather chosen to be obliged to strangers for money for my support. And to what purpose is it for me to leave France and return with my accounts and vouchers unaudited ? It is equally useless to transmit them in that state. My enemies represented me as a defaulter, grown rich out of the public moneys in my hands, and prejudiced the minds of Congress so strongly against me, that all my efforts in America to obtain even a hearing were vain and ineffectual. My present situation, as well as the state of my accounts, give the lie to every assertion or insinuation of the kind ; yet I am still left to suffer under the calumny in America, and to be obliged to strangers for money for my support in Europe. I will not trust myself further on the subject, lest something escape me which may offend, without my intending it.

I hope Congress will impartially review my case in every stage of it, and that they will not force me to appeal to the laws of a foreign nation, or to the tribunal of the public in Europe, for the recovery of my right, and for justice to my character, which the great

and first law of nature will oblige me to do, unless immediately relieved by those who owe me, and more who owe to their own character and to that of their country, the justice which I demand.

I have the honor to be, with great esteem and respect, &c.,

SILAS DEANE.

*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., Wharton Ed., IV. 415.*

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TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Paris, May 16th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you a few days since, inclosing Mr. Monthieu's account, and duplicates of Mr. Vanderperes papers, and took the liberty of desiring that you would inform me when you sent off your dispatches for America. I now take the liberty of sending you a packet for America, and you will oblige me much by putting it under your cover by Mr. Laurens. I should not give you this trouble were it not that Mr. Laurens, from political or other motives, has avoided me, though I called at his lodgings. The letters are simply on business of a private nature, except the one to the President of Congress, which is to solicit the appointment of an auditor to settle my accounts and those of the public in which I have had any concern. I propose doing myself the honor of waiting on you at breakfast on Saturday morning, and in the mean time have the honor to be, &c. &c.,

S. DEANE.

Doctor Franklin.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO FERDINAND GRAND.

[May, 1781.]

SIR,—Inclosed I send you two of the bills drawn as you proposed. Being obliged to go out immediately

after dinner, I pray you to send me by the bearer fifty louis d'orrs, one-half in gold, and the other in silver. I have inclosed my receipt, and am, with much Esteem,  
Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

N. B.—The two bills on Monsr. Monthieu for 3,000 livres each at 3 usances.

Thomas Mss.

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TO SIMEON DEANE.\*

Paris, May 16th, 1781.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I expect by the time you receive this you will hear me announced, from letters written by certain Americans on this side the water, as an enemy to my country; though I do not imagine you will credit such reports, yet I am persuaded you interest yourself so much in what concerns me that you will be glad to know what gave rise to them. Too many of the Americans who arrive in France bring with them all that spirit and rage and of party by which they were actuated at home; they think, or pretend to think, that the only way to serve America, and at the same time to make their Court here, is to represent the situation of our affairs totally different from what it really is. In August last I arrived here; Mr. Searle soon after me. That gentleman asserted that the British were shut up in Charlestown, so that he said "*not a soldier dared to venture out far enough to shoot a bird;*" that General Washington's army consisted of more than 20,000 effective men, well supplied; that, so far from wanting recruits, men pressed for to enlist; that America was in no way anxious for peace, but, on the contrary, wished the war might be continued until England should be humbled, if not ruined; "*until (said he) that old Lion's claws shall be cut, and his teeth all drawn.*" When any one doubted of these and such

\* One of the intercepted letters; see *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.



like extravagant assertions, he was sure to be answered with a most important air, "You must pardon me, Sir, but I do know, for I am a Member of Congress, the only one that ever was in Europe in that quality, and I think I must know better than any other, having been Chairman of most of their Committees." Those who, from their personal knowledge, were able to bring facts as well as circumstances directly in contradiction to his assertions, were sure to be represented as Tories, unfriendly, or as enemies to America; though events too notorious to be concealed, and the representations of Congress of the state of America, fully contradicts his assertions, yet all signified nothing. The man who ventured to question the policy or rectitude of any measure of Congress; who could not agree that America was able alone to support the war; that Great Britain was exhausted, and become as weak as she was wicked; that commerce had done us the most essential mischief; that merchants, that is American merchants, who he declared to be, in general, mere pitiful speculators, and undeserving of the name of merchants, had, by their trade, done us such injury that it would have been well for America had they long since been extirpated; that the goods sent out by France had been worse for us than if in their room forty thousand Russians had been sent to fight against us; the man who would not assent to these, and such like mad assertions, but ventured to contradict them, was sure to be noted down as unfriendly, at least, if not an enemy to his country; and thus I was entered on his black list. You will hardly believe it possible, that any man, without being perfectly mad, could be capable of talking in such a manner, yet many, as well as myself, can assure you that this was the common stile of his conversation; that he often went beyond anything I have told you of; and what will equally surprise you is, that there were at Paris Americans who joined him, and acted as his echo; you well know that I am so incapable of acting a tame, equivocal part, that I do not

always act even a cautious one. I did every thing in my power to discountenance this mad rant ; this drew on me the ill will of several of my countrymen whose good opinions I wished to have in preference, tho' too indifferent as to either to step aside from the line of truth and candor to gain the latter, or to avoid the former. I have said here (what is acknowledged even by Frenchmen, and ought by this time to be known in America) that Great Britain is not an exhausted, contemptible kingdom, but on the contrary, that they possess a greater share of energy and vigor, and are capable of making greater exertions than any nation in the world besides. Was it criminal to say what all Europe acknowledges with surprise and admiration to be the case? Was or is it high treason to call in question the perfect wisdom and rectitude of any of the measures of Congress, or to withhold one's assent to assertions declaring that Congress never were at any period so respectable both at home and abroad as at this time? that they never possessed the confidence of the people at large in so perfect a degree as at present? and that America had never been at any time more unanimous, or in better circumstances? By Mr. Searle and some others it has been deemed criminal, next to high treason, not to go those lengths ; indeed, one would imagine that he carried it still higher, for speaking one day at table (a French gentleman who understood English being present) on American affairs, and the Americans then in Europe, he exclaimed that he wished to God every American in France might be instantly hanged, and that he would be content to suffer among them, could that be effected, since by that means a better set would be introduced.

I should not trouble you with these expressions, which you can consider in no other light than the ravings of madness, were it not that this gentleman has been seconded and supported in this stile by some Americans here, though I know of no one of them who has gone by any means so far. What idea must

foreigners have of us and of our councils, when they hear a man who boasts on all occasions of being a member of Congress, and to have had a principal share in all our public measures, talk at such a rate? You can easily perceive, and without my proceeding to recite instances of nearly the same nature, which I could easily do, sufficient to fill a large volume, whence has arisen one of the principal causes of our national character and credit having sunk so very low within these three years past.

Though this letter and others I have lately written contain my opinion of our affairs, and of the state as well as of the views of the Powers in Europe with which we have any concern, yet I have on no occasion ventured to make it public in Europe, but have most cautiously avoided giving of it, even in private conversation. I consider the people of America to be still too violently agitated to listen to any thing which appears to contradict their favourite wish; they have been taught to believe that their happiness and that of their posterity is inseparably connected with independency, or rather with their own Sovereignty. The generous and noble enthusiasm which first inspired them to oppose acts and claims injurious to our rights and privileges, has been kept up after the claims and acts have ceased to exist, and its force turned to the support of independent sovereignty, a claim never heard of on our part until since the year 1775. Yet I cannot in justice to myself and friends conceal from them my sentiments on the important subject, nor the dangers which to me appear at the door. It is the interest of each of the contending parties to make peace as soon as possible, and nothing at this time prevents, but our claim of independent sovereignty, which France by treaty is bound to support. If we consent with an accommodation with England, the great obstacle will be removed; if we do not, it is probable that the war will become more general, and it is not difficult to foresee where we shall land, and

in what condition in the general storm. Have we not, by sending ambassadors to almost every court in Europe, had an opportunity of trying the disposition of the several courts towards us? Not one of them, except Dr. Franklin, has been received; the others, after an enormous and foolish expence, have returned, or are still waiting with their credentials in their hands, at some Minister's door, undistinguished amongst the crowd of suppliants. Our submitting to this, continuing to solicit under such mortifying treatment, and our appointing an ambassador to Russia, after having been refused audience almost everywhere else in Europe, but ill agrees with the character of independent sovereignty. The spirit and manlike boldness with which we asserted our rights, and ventured singly to oppose Great Britain in the defence of them, drew the attention of all Europe, and raised our character high, and the very name of an American became respectable; but the turn which our affairs have taken since the year 1778, owing to the management of them by men intoxicated with the ideas of sovereignty and the flattering prospect of becoming ambassadors, envoys, &c., thus reversed the scene, and convinced the world at large how unequal our gentlemen in Congress are to the task of Sovereigns and of great statesmen. Emoluments have had their weight with these men; the Secretary to an embassy has not been thought below their acceptance, especially as a salary of 1000*l.* sterling per annum was attached to it.

The salaries to the different boards, though by no means extravagant, have been tempting objects to many; and the civil list of Congress, which has been as rapidly increasing as that of France has been diminishing under the hands of its present minister of finances, held out hopes, at least, to all. It is no way surprising that men in possession or in expectation of sovereignty or its emoluments, should labour incessantly to persuade America that its peace, liberty, and safety cannot be secure but under an independent

democratical government. The men of this character form a numerous body, and they "labour faithfully in their vocations." It is to no purpose that the experience of all ages and nations of the world contradict the doctrine which they advance ; but few read the history of past ages, and still fewer reflect on what they have read, and on what the present time offers to their most serious consideration. If we were contending only for momentary peace, safety, and liberty, or only for the enjoyment of them for the present age, with the offers made us, we must be more than madmen to continue the contest ; but the professed object, and the only one that can in any degree justify a prosecution of the war, is the security of those blessings to the latest posterity. Will an independent democratical government secure them better than any other ? In the examination of the question, some regard ought to be paid to what has passed in the world ; and we ought to inquire if any country ever was, for any time, even for one century, at peace, free and happy, under a democracy ? For myself, I confess I have never heard or read of such a country, either antient or modern. All the antient republics were aristocratical in a greater or less degree ; the modern ones are the same ; and the moment that the democracy in any state breaks down or subjected the aristocracy, everything has ever gone to confusion ; peace, liberty, and safety have all been lost in the distractions of democracy, which in a very short time has prepared the way to absolute monarchy. But possibly America has produced a race of men more simple, virtuous, and patriotic than any part of the world has hitherto been blessed with. If we are sure of this, we have some grounds for making the experiment, if what has failed in every other instance ; but if in fact we find ourselves agitated and led by the same passions as the rest of mankind have ever been, we ought to pause and weigh seriously whether in future we shall be blessed for having fixed the peace, liberty, and safety

of America on a sure basis, or, on the contrary, be execrated for having destroyed the very basis and foundation of good order and government, and entailed on posterity all the miseries which anarchy or despotism can inflict. It will, perhaps, be said that the nations which have been so convulsed and distracted by Democracy were previously corrupted. It may be true; but did any nation ever retain that degree of disinterestedness and of rigid patriotic virtue necessary to support good order and government under a Democracy, after they became rich and powerful? Further, where is the nation that ever preserved it, even in poverty, under a Democracy? I confess I recollect no one. The Spartans, by banishing wealth and luxury, and holding commerce, the parent of both, in abhorrence, preserved their form of government (liberty they never had any idea of) for many ages; but their government was as far, or farther, removed from Democracy than it was from absolute Monarchy. The Romans began under a system of government partly Royal and partly Aristocratical. The latter destroyed the former, and, to support itself, mixed some portion of the Democratic with the Aristocratic, to gain over the people to assist them in the perpetual exclusion of Royalty. The Democratic power was at first very confined and limited, and the Aristocratic remained for several centuries almost absolute; but in every struggle between the two the Democratic gained more or less the advantage over the Aristocratic, until after the most violent and bloody contest the former came off victorious, and the Roman empire became in effect an absolute Democracy, which soon prepared them to receive an absolute master. Cæsar, with the advantage of victories and personal abilities unparalleled even in the Roman histories, could not have succeeded, had not the Republic been previously thrown into confusion, and all principle and subordination destroyed by a Democracy, at the head of which he for some time placed himself to facilitate his becoming their sole

Sovereign, Lord, and Emperor. But there is no necessity for travelling far or searching into antient history; nor should I have mentioned the above instances but by the great stress laid by certain declaimers in American assemblies on the Spartan and Roman government and their virtues, whilst it is evident they either know nothing of them more than their names, or wilfully misrepresent facts. We have had some small experience ourselves of democratical government; and we cannot, from what we have seen and experienced, but be able to form a judgement what the consequences will be when it comes to operate in full vigor and without restraint.

Absolute democracy and absolute monarchy are nearly connected with each other, and even wise and tried patriots have, in all ages, submitted to the latter, to escape from the distractions of the former. Perhaps the situation of our country upon every account is such that it will not bear a strict comparison with any other. I believe it to be the case; at the same time I am of opinion that this is against us, under the proposed government of a democracy.

At this time we are of some weight in the general scale, and may, by improving it, be able, though not to dictate the law absolutely, yet to obtain such terms of peace as may come up to every reasonable wish. But are we sure of obtaining the same when the great contending Powers, tired of the war, come to settle their differences by a peace? Shall we then find ourselves in a situation to dictate or to be dictated to? We have ranged ourselves on the side of France and Spain against England, but shall we, in a treaty of peace, be considered and respected as their equal, or shall we be regarded in the settlement of their accounts as an article to be used in discount by either, as the balance may fall? This is a serious enquiry, and France has already put it in our power to answer the question. When Spain offered to mediate between France and England, the latter accepted the mediation,

on condition that France withdrew their rescript of March, 1778, which declared America independent. To this France replied that England could not with propriety demand of them a concession at the beginning of a war, the events of which were uncertain, which they could only be brought to grant at the close of an unfortunate war. This reply of France says plainly, that if the war should be unfortunate on their part, our independence may be given up, and shews in what point of light we are considered. The events of the war have not hitherto been fortunate on the part of France and Spain, nor have they been greatly unfortunate, though the balance (were the accounts now to be settled) is against them. Future events are uncertain, but should France or Spain unfortunately loose considerably, we and our independence remain as a pledge, by a restoration of which their losses will be made up; if, on the other hand, England proves unfortunate, the acknowledgement of our independence may serve them in the same stead; if the latter proves the case, as it possibly may, after two or three years more of war, what by that time will be our situation? Our country ravaged and exhausted, our commerce destroyed, an immense internal and foreign debt contracted, the interest only of which will be a greater tax than we ever had any idea of before this war, to which will be added the support of civil government, as expensive, or more so than formerly, and the expences of new establishments, internal and external, such as Courts of Admiralty, &c., Boards of Trade, of Marine, of Treasury, &c., &c., of Ambassadors, Envoys, Consuls, &c., which alone will amount to more than all our former public expences; besides, we must have a marine force, at least, or we cannot expect to have our flag respected, nor our commerce secure from imposition. Shall we find ourselves equal to all this? Will the inhabitants of America, taught to believe that they fought to exonerate themselves from taxes, be contented under



ten times the tax they ever paid, and to have the same entailed on their posterity? In this state of weakness, debt, and discontent, is it possible that we must lie at the mercy of the victorious or most fortunate power, which ever it be, at the peace? If England dictates the terms of peace, we must be unconditionally at their mercy; if France does it, we shall be equally so at theirs; in this moment we may escape the danger of lying at the mercy of either. France will not be able to dictate the law to England without having previously so effectually reduced that power as to render it unable to interfere in our behalf, should any, even the most cruel, terms be dictated to us. If this is a just state of the case, and it appears to me such, we may possibly enjoy a nominal independent sovereignty, but in fact and reality may be dependant, and that unconditionally, on France; on the other hand, should the war prove unfortunate on the part of France, France may, agreeable to their public declaration, withdraw its rescript, which declared us independent, and leave us to unconditional submission to England. We are thus pushed on by the continuance of the war towards the streights of Scylla and Charybdis, but, thank God, we have not yet arrived there, and if there is any prudence or skill with those who are at the helm of our public ship, we may land safe and honourably on solid ground. I have given you, and that freely, my sentiments on our public situation. Though treated with a degree of injustice and ingratitude which has scarce a parallel in history by a faction of my countrymen, my country and its interests still lie nearest my heart. I have met with many English, Scotch, and Irish families in the course of my acquaintance in this country, who, following the dictates of conscience, and what they thought to be their duty, took part with the Stuart family, and who, in consequence, had been proscribed, and driven from their country under the loss of title, fortune, &c. I was at first surprized to find that these people, though many of them had been born in France, and inheriting,

as one might suppose, the severest resentments against England, still valued themselves on the country from which they and their ancestors had been expelled with the utmost marks of cruelty and disgrace, and, in a word, in spite of all the varnish and paint that had been laid on in the course of a century in France, the original canvass was still visible in their sentiments and actions. Since I have been in exile myself, my surprize has ceased. I find it is not difficult to change climate and country, but that it is impossible for any one, that is not either less or more than man, to conquer those early attachments and predilections which every citizen of a free government has for his country and its interests. My saying one word on the affairs of America is one proof of this ; but my letters being filled with scarce anything else, shews that, whatever resolutions I have taken to the contrary, I can neither think nor write without touching, and even dwelling, on the subject ; in fact, it is the only one which lies down with me at night and rises with me in the morning ; it accompanies me in every circle, whether gay or serious, and often makes me blind and deaf to every thing else. I am sometimes attacked by prudence, which asks me what I have to do, under my circumstances, with the politicks of any country, or particularly of one more than an other. She tells me, if I have time to listen, which I seldom have, that of all men I ought not to meddle ; that, being fairly on shore, though after suffering a shipwreck, I have nothing left but to collect what I can of my fortune out of the wreck, and make the best of it. Though judgment pronounces fully in favour of this opinion, still I cannot remain indifferent to what affects a country which I must for ever call mine. I take up my pen almost every day to write to some friend or other in America. I determine not to let any thing political fall from it, yet before I have finished one page I find myself in the full force of a current which I cannot escape or resist ; but I will be carried on no further by it in this

letter. I promised myself with being able to do something in the commercial way. I have been disappointed from various causes. I hoped to have finished my accounts soon, and received the considerable balance due me from Congress; but though my accounts, with vouchers to support my demands, have been ready more than four months, I can find no auditor. Congress have been informed near a year since that their auditor could not serve, yet they have not appointed any other, tho' they knew I was waiting at my own expence to adjust my account. The cruelty and injustice of this proceeding is too visible to require my enlarging on it. I am discouraged in writing to men who consider themselves omnipotent, and who have, among their other attributes, taken that of doing injustice when they please, and justify all by the tyrant's plea, necessity. Out of a balance of more than 300,000 livres, I have not been able to obtain one shilling. By a prevailing junto in Congress, I have been represented in America as a defaulter grown rich at the public expence; this was done to prejudice my countrymen against me, and to cover or justify their horrid ingratitude, and at the same time to force me on a dangerous and expensive voyage, to obtain justice here, where they had previously taken such arrangement as to counteract me in pursuit of my right. It is true they appointed an auditor, but laid him under such restrictions that they must have known at the time that no man of spirit would accept the office; and, on a refusal, they have neglected the naming any other. Does this shew them acting like my creditors in earnest for the settlement, or like shuffling, evasive, debtors, who push it off by every means in their power, to have some plausible excuse for the non-payment of their debts? The world will determine without hesitation, and I am resolved the cause shall be soon laid before them. I despair of seeing of any change for the better. I have long, tho' impatiently, waited for it, to the almost total ruin of my fortune and prospects

in life, and can any one blame me if I lay before the world the history of that injustice and ingratitude under which I have suffered, and of those vile intrigues and detestable cabals which have occasioned the most complicated misery and distress to my country? I am confident no disinterested or impartial man will censure me for doing myself justice, and for disabusing the public with respect to certain characters and proceedings. At the same time that I have ample materials in my hands for doing this, I take no pleasure in the idea; I have put it off as long as possible, but I cannot forbear much longer. I hope this letter will come safe to your hands; if so communicate the contents to such of your and my friends as you judge proper, but let no extracts or copies be made of it. I have already exhausted your patience; I will therefore add only that I am, my dear Brother,

Most affectionately yours,

SILAS DEANE.

Simeon Deane, Esq.

Merchant, Williamsburg, Virginia.

*The Royal Gazette, Nov. 10th, and 14th, 1781.*

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TO JESSE ROOT.\*

Paris, May 20th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Presuming that you still continue in Congress, and that the friendship which has so long subsisted between us remains unimpaired, I have determined to write you a long and confidential letter on subjects intimately connected to the well being of our country. Some of the sentiments I am about to communicate may, perhaps, appear inconsistent with my former conduct and professions, and therefore it is incumbent on me to explain the causes which have in any degree changed my political opinions. I need not particularly recur to the origin of the present

\* One of the intercepted letters; see *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.

controversy with Great Britain. What I professed and did at that period was professed with sincerity, and done with the best intentions. But had I then foreseen one half of the calamities that have followed the measures of that time, instead of approving, I should have most strenuously opposed them, for it must be confessed that we were actuated rather by the apprehension of future grievances than by the actual pressure of any which we really felt; and, most certainly, I should not have thought it either wise or justifiable to run into the horrors of civil war without more urgent necessity and a much greater load of oppression. But, unfortunately, we, in America, were deceived by those flattering accounts transmitted to us from England, as much as the British government was deceived by opposite accounts sent from America. We were fully persuaded that a majority of the people of Great Britain approved our claims, and that a short suspension of commerce with that kingdom would obtain us all we desired. Under this delusion we went forward until hostilities suddenly began. Those who have most studied human nature and the history of mankind, will best conceive the effects and changes which followed. Inflamed, and afterwards exasperated, by the provocations and ravages of war, our minds became gradually alienated from that people whose ancestors were ours, and to whom we had always been connected by the strongest ties that can bind or unite societies of men; we indignantly slighted that union which had been esteemed our greatest glory and happiness, and under whose benign influence we had increased and prospered beyond example. With this change in our sentiments, we heard of the British government having engaged foreign troops to be employed against us, and we naturally determined to follow the example, and seek foreign aid from those likely to afford it. For this purpose, and with this commission, I came to Europe, and the Declaration of Independency soon followed, a declaration which, though absent, I approved

of, because I thought Independency attainable with but little more difficulty or bloodshed, and that our countrymen were wise and virtuous enough to use it rightly and make it a blessing. I had, besides, other reasons. I thought an independent government was allotted to us by nature, and that the establishment of it could not be long prevented after the change which had taken place in our sentiments respecting it ; that to depart from the claim we had made to it would, at that time and in that state of things, be like hastily skinning over a wound corrupted within, and would only convert to waste all the blood which had been spilt in the contest, and entail on our children, if not on ourselves, the necessity of shortly beginning and supporting another. Actuated, therefore, by a desire to spare the people of England, as well as of America, from a renewal of such calamities, I heartily concurred to negotiating and signing the treaties with France, and afterwards returned to America, in the hopes of seeing our country soon restored to the blessings of peace, commerce, and good government. I need not tell you that the hope proved abortive, nor need I explain to you how much I was disappointed and dissatisfied by the changes which had taken place in America, and which were every day increasing. You will recollect the conversations that passed between us on this subject. I found, indeed, the hills, the mountains, and rivers of America situated as formerly, but almost every thing which had distinguished and done honour to the inhabitants appeared to have changed ; the dangers of suddenly releasing a people from the restraints of regular government, which were visibly experienced. Noisy and designing individuals had risen from the lowest order, and displaced the best and most respectable members of society ; the new governments were almost every where feeble and ill administered ; anarchy and licentious violence frequently prevailed, and even in Congress itself reason, patriotism, and justice were but too often vanquished

by faction, cabal, and views of private interest. But what appeared a more alarming evil was the depravity of morals which had taken place among our countrymen, and been encouraged, if not produced, by the revolution, and particularly by the laws for making the depreciated and depreciating paper currency a legal tender, instead of its nominal amount in gold and silver; laws which not only afforded temptations, but in effect offered rewards to dishonesty, by enabling those already in debt to liberate themselves for a twentieth or thirtieth part in value of the real debt, and encouraging all who could obtain credit or property from others to withhold payment, in the certain expectation of being able at a future period legally to exonerate themselves almost for nothing; laws by which more injustice seems to have been occasioned than what was ever committed under any other government, and among the same number of people in so short a space of time. I do not mean, however, to censure our countrymen with severity. I am persuaded that probity and good morals were no where more generally prevalent than in North-America before the late revolution, and that any other people would have been at least as much changed by the same causes and in the same circumstances. I could not avoid, however, regretting that a similar change had taken place, and lamenting the miserable prospects which were present on every side Agriculture declining, the progress of arts and sciences suspended, the education of the rising generation (the hopes of our country) neglected, thousands of industrious youth forced from the plough and other useful, homely occupations, and prematurely destroyed by the diseases, wants, and sufferings of a military life, whilst the survivors, by exchanging their plain morals and honest industry for the habits of idleness and vice, appeared more likely to burthen than to benefit their country hereafter; and, above all, the numerous causes and sources of future dissensions between the different

States left very little room for agreeable expectations or ideas. Distressed at the prospect of these and a thousand other evils, of which there appeared neither a remedy nor an end, you will not wonder that I quitted a scene so unpleasant, and came again to this country, where I have had time and opportunity to reflect dispassionately on the general state of things and the probable consequences, so far, at least, as the interests of our country are concerned ; and from these reflections, combined with all the facts and informations that I have been able to obtain, I have deduced two propositions, of the truth of which I am fully convinced, however extraordinary they may appear in America. The first of these is, that there is no probability of our being able finally to establish our independency ; and the second, that, if it were established, it would prove rather a curse than a blessing to us. As I am persuaded that you will at least read with attention and candour what I write on subjects so interesting, I will enter into a particular consideration of each of these propositions, and begin with the first, which concerns the probability of our being able finally to establish the independency which we have assumed and declared. Experience has, I presume, by this time so far corrected the vain opinions we formerly entertained of our strength and resources, that even the most insane of all our mad politicians will hardly pretend that we can alone resist the force of Great Britain. The final establishment of our independency must, therefore, greatly depend on the assistance which other nations may be able and willing to afford us ; and I think it very evident that we have most egregiously flattered and deceived ourselves on this subject. There is, indeed, a generous propensity in human nature which inclines mankind to favour those who struggle against superior force in defence of their freedom and just rights ; and this propensity led many individuals in different parts of Europe (who considered us engaged in such a struggle) to



bestow on us their unavailing good wishes and applauses. But it is impossible that the motives of our revolt should have been really approved by the government of any kingdom or state of Europe, because there is not one among them whose subjects and colonies were so free as those of Great Britain; and it would have been manifestly absurd in any government to vindicate our claim to privileges which at the same time it denied to its own subjects; and, besides, insurrections are naturally viewed with jealousy and dislike by all regular, long established governments as of dangerous example to their own subjects. It happened, indeed, that Great-Britain, by her vast acquisitions of wealth and power, had become the object of envy and dread to certain European nations, who, without expecting or intending that we should ever become independent, were pleased at our revolt, and rejoiced to see that kingdom weakening itself by a destructive civil war; and least we should be too soon subdued, and the mischiefs of our revolt too soon terminated, a little scanty assistance was from time to time secretly given to us, until this alliance was publicly announced, and France engaged in the war against Great-Britain. It might have been naturally expected that every other Power in Europe inclined to favour our independency would have openly acknowledged it after the example of France. Great-Britain was then universally believed to be so weakened and discouraged, that no nation could have been restrained through the fear of incurring her resentment; and, therefore, it is difficult to conceive why any one really wishing for our independency should have withheld from it the sanction of an open avowal or acknowledgement, which would necessarily have tended to finish the work and secure our future gratitude and friendship. But though more than three years have passed since the French alliance was announced, no other nation has manifested the least intention to follow the example, or the least favorable

inclination towards us ; but several have, on the contrary, most unequivocally discovered that their wishes and views are repugnant to our pretensions. The government of Portugal very early proscribed all intercourse with us, in terms of extreme vigor, if not hostility ; and this very proscription remains unrepealed. That of Denmark has denied our independency, and even forced out of our hands (as out of the hands of pirates) several prizes which our ships-of-war had taken from Great-Britain, and sent into the ports of Norway. The emperor is notoriously an enemy to our independency. He retains an hereditary attachment to Great-Britain, as well as jealousy to the House of Bourbon, and views with impatience on every side the territories of his ancestors possessed by his neighbours. He is in the full vigor of his life, master of the best-disciplined, most numerous and formidable army in Europe, and certainly is not without ambitious, enterprizing views ; so that, should the war continue, we have everything to fear from his influence and interference, which certainly will be against those nations who possess the countries he wishes to regain, and not against Great-Britain, who witholds nothing from him, and from whom he has nothing to claim. He has, indeed, already prepared the way to interfere, by offering to mediate between the belligerent powers, and you need not be told that an unsuccessful mediator almost always takes part in the quarrel. The Dutch, though at war with England, publicly disavow our independency, and so far from connecting their cause with ours, that they notoriously would have made a separate peace with Great-Britain, had not the British government refused to treat separately with the States-General ; a refusal that manifests how little the British Ministry feels itself embarrassed by these new enemies. Whatever you in America may imagine, the true interests of the Dutch are by no means favorable to our independency. They have no manufactures of any consequence for our use, and as merchants,

fishermen, and carriers, we should certainly become their most dangerous rivals and competitors. Respecting Russia and Sweden, they certainly cannot expect to gain by our independency; excepting indigo and rice, we have nothing for their use. Russia exports tobacco, and their other productions are all similar to ours, and we should naturally interfere with them in every market. The governments of these countries have never manifested the least disposition to favour our independency; I think, at most, we can only flatter ourselves that they will remain idle spectators. Congress appear in deed to have formed very pleasing hopes from the Northern treaty of neutrality, and have consequently appointed a Minister Plenipotentiary to the Empress of Russia, who is now on his way to Petersburg, where he will doubtless find that humiliating reception which their other Ministers have met at every other court but that of France. It seems, however, that no experience will cure them of the folly of thus meanly exposing themselves to new insults. Respecting the conduct and views of Spain, I think they are of a nature that deserves our most serious consideration, I had almost said detestation. You know that a secret article was annexed to the treaty of alliance with France, by which his Most Christian Majesty stipulated, and the American Commissioner engaged, that the Spanish government should be entitled to accede to the treaties made with France, or to make other similar treaties with us, and we were fully persuaded that government would, in a reasonable time, accede to or make such treaties; otherwise we most certainly should not have thought ourselves justifiable in thus binding our constituents indefinitely, and leaving the Spanish government absolutely free respecting the time. Above three years have now elapsed since this engagement was made on our parts, and near two years since Spain has been at open war with Great-Britain. No more time, and no more better opportunity, can therefore be desired by the

Spanish court for treating us, and yet there has not been the least appearance of a desire to do it, or of an intention ever to own us as an independent people ; though being at war with Great-Britain, no obstacle or restraint can possibly arise from the fear of offending the British government. It is universally understood that his Catholic Majesty after the peace of 1763, always retained a strong desire of revenging and repairing his losses by the preceeding war. The controversy between Great-Britain and her colonies promised a favourable opportunity of doing this, and therefore he early began to equip a powerful fleet and make ready to avail himself of future occasions and events. The treaties which France suddenly made with us were most certainly and avowedly contrary to the views of the Spanish Minister, and there is not the smallest reason to believe that any change favorable to us has since taken place in the policy and designs of the Spanish court ; but there are the strongest reasons to justify a contrary conclusion. That court professedly came into the war from motives absolutely foreign to our independency, and has since prosecuted it solely with the view of recovering Gibraltar and the Floridas. Especial care has been taken that not a single Spanish ship or vessel of war (though many frequently pass by our ports) should ever stop in any one of them, least that court should incur the reproach of having assisted or favored a people whom it neither acknowledges, nor apparently ever intends to consider in any character but that of rebellious subjects of the British Crown. Our operations and designs must indeed necessarily have great influence on the progress and issue of the war, and therefore the ministry of Spain were naturally solicitous for information about them, and to obtain it a Spanish gentleman was sent to reside among us ; but though Congress had at different times appointed no less than three ministers to the Spanish court, this gentleman was never permitted to assume any public character, and therefore his resi-

dence among us was a continual insult, an indirect denial of our independency, so long as he lived, and his death produced a remarkable instance of condescension and inconsistency, not to say hypocrisy, in Congress, who, to liberate the soul of the deceased from Purgatory, very devoutly attended one of the most superstitious rights of a religion which that body but a little time before, in addressing the people of England, had described as "having dispersed impiety, bigotry, persecution, murder, and rebellion through every part of the world." But this and all other endeavors to conciliate the good will of Spain appear to have failed. Near two years have passed since Congress appointed their president, a gentleman of distinguished merit and talents, as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Catholic King, and he has not only been unsuccessful in the business of his mission, but is now humbly waiting at Madrid without any probability of obtaining the smallest acknowledgement or notice of his public character. Supposing the government of Spain to be most unalterably determined that we shall finally be the dupes and sacrifices of this war, it might still have been expected, that as we are fighting against the same enemies, it would have assisted us with some of the means to fight; but in this, as in other things, we have been disappointed, not only from what Congress expected from the "*overflowing treasures of Spain*," but of what policy ought to have engaged that court to afford us. The little paltry sums that have been obtained (less than a mercantile house in moderate credit might have supplied) have been dealt out with such niggardly reluctance, that it manifests the most beggarly meanness and insensibility to accept, and much more to solicit them so long and importunately. Nothing is more evident to me than that Spain looks on our independency with jealousy and aversion, as being a most dangerous example to her vast American colonies, and of the most dangerous tendency in respect to her future dominion

over them. Indeed, she cannot desire that so remarkable a revolt from the greatest power of Europe should, by *its successful issue*, afford encouragement to her distant provinces to make similar attempts, nor can she wish that a new maritime empire should rise up so contiguously to her treasures and American possessions, which at all times have been the objects of her peculiar care and jealousy. An empire too far removed from Europe to be restrained by the power of Spain, and too near the sources of that power not to excite the utmost fear and apprehension. So long as the Spanish government continues at war with England, so long it will naturally wish us to be the instruments of injuring and distressing that nation. But when the war ends, that government will undoubtedly wish to see us not only reduced again to the dominion of Great-Britain, but at the same time weakened and chastised ; so that instead of affording encouragement to its colonies by a successful revolt, we may serve as an example to deter them from attempting to become independent. I think it therefore evident that France, the only nation that has acknowledged our independency, is also the only one inclined to support it. How long that nation, contrary to the views of Spain and the rest of Europe, will think it wise or necessary to continue the war for our support, are questions that merit our most serious consideration.

The only advantages which France can have expected from our independency, are a diminution of the trade and power of England, and an increase of her own commerce by a participation in ours ; these advantages doubtless were expected from the treaties with America, and few measures of government ever gave more universal satisfaction than was manifested by the French nation when those treaties were announced ; but since my return here I have seen that satisfaction generally abated and succeeded by disappointment, so that in truth but little benefit is now

expected from our independency, at least by the most discerning part of this nation. The merchants complain of losses on almost every adventure to our country, through the depreciation of the paper currency, the breach of public faith, and other causes unfavourable to us. They complain of a general predilection towards English manufactures, which, in spite of the war, and the laws of the several states, are imported through Holland, St. Eustatius, &c., and every where purchased by our countrymen in preference to those of France, or any other nation. Most of the French gentlemen that have served in our army, or travelled in our country, complain of a similar predilection in favour of Englishmen, and manners, and a similar aversion from those of France. They perceive a general dislike of them among the people, and alledge that French Officers who fight and bleed in our cause receive fewer attentions and civilities from our countrymen than are bestowed on British officers of inferior rank when taken prisoners. In short, that our manners, habits, propensities, and prejudices, are all English as well as our language; and that neither regard for our allies, the authority of our laws, nor yet the animosities which the war necessarily produces, can engage us, even during its continuance, to suspend the use of British manufactures, or lay aside our former regard for individuals of that nation; and it is, therefore, naturally concluded that when peace shall be restored, whether we remain independant or not, the greatest part, if not the whole, of our commerce, will certainly return again to its former British channels, and that our former attachment to that nation will again revive, so as to leave little or no benefit to this country from our independence. Those of our countrymen who visit France afford cause for similar conclusions, retaining the same appearances, manners, language, prejudices, affections, and aversions; they are confounded with, and mistaken for, Englishmen by all but those to whom they are per-

sonally known ; and as their peculiarities but ill accord or assimilate with those of our new allies, they feel like strangers or exiles from their country, and generally hasten through this kingdom to Ostend, Amsterdam, &c., from whence, in spite of Dr. Franklin's earnest dissuasions, and even the menaces of Mess. Adams, Dana, Searles, &c., the greatest part of them secretly venture over to England, and when arrived there (tho' in constant danger of being imprisoned) they almost believe themselves at home ; such is the power of old habits and early prejudices. You will not, therefore, wonder that a discerning, jealous nation like this begins to think with Horace, *Naturam expellas, &c.*, and to perceive that nothing will finally detach us and our commerce from Great Britain, and that even if our independency was established, we should soon be again united to that country by confederation and the closest alliance, and to contribute as much, if not more, than ever to its trade and power. This, the most sensible part of the French nation believe, and with this belief it is impossible they should think it wise and expedient to persist obstinately in wasting the force and treasures of France, and endangering her possessions, from an object unlikely to be obtained, and which if obtained would afford no solid advantage. You will not, therefore, be surprised that the war, though begun with general applause, has now become unpopular, as well as our cause in this country. A great part of the nation ardently wish for peace, and as our independency and engagement of France to support it are the only obstacles, it is not likely the nation will long look with patience on that which notoriously opposes its desires, and even its felicity, and therefore it cannot be reasonably expected that France will long persevere in the war on our account. A man must be little acquainted with history who can imagine that because the French government has acknowledged our independency, and entered into treaties with us, that it will therefore never desert us.



The same government had much oftener acknowledged and asserted the right of the Stuart family to the Crown of England, and had much oftener promised to maintain that right, yet those promises were never fulfilled ; multitudes who trusted to them were deceived and sacrificed ; even the Pretender himself, notwithstanding the most formal acknowledgements and frequent promises, was not only abandoned, but, to gratify the British government, was exiled, seized, and ignominiously transported out of France. I have many reasons individually to be satisfied with the French Ministry, and therefore I would not mention transactions of this nature, even to you, were they not so generally notorious. It may, however, appear invidious, and it certainly is unnecessary, to recollect such facts, or apply them to the present question, because the French government has itself, with unusual candor, publicly explained its opinion of the extent and force of its engagements to us, when they say, in reply to the demand of England that France would withdraw its rescript of the 13th March, 1778, as a preliminary to the mediation of Spain, that it was not reasonable to expect of them to do that at the beginning of a war (the events of which were uncertain) which could only be done at the close of an unsuccessful war.

France, therefore, holds herself at liberty to desert our alliance and independency at the end of an unsuccessful war ; and, as the present is not pretended to be a successful war, the inference is plain, and the time to apply it may be near. So long, indeed, as we are able to support a great part of the war, and France escapes any considerable disaster, this government may not be in haste to abandon us, because we may be thought the cheapest and fittest instrument for weakening our parent country. But our resources, credit, and ability to bear any considerable share in the war will be soon totally annihilated, and when this happens, I am fully convinced that France will no longer suffer her treaties to deprive her of peace. Let

us, however, suppose that France should obstinately persist in the war, and even that Spain, contrary to her system and views, should do the same in order to establish our independency, still it does not appear probable that this object would be finally obtained. The navy of France has for some time been in the most formidable state to which it can be carried. That of Spain had nearly attained this point of perfection before she entered into the war; and yet, while both were in this state, no advantages were gained over England. What, then, can we expect hereafter when the navy of both countries must daily decline? In France, every seaman being at the disposal of government, the greatest number of ships of war, can possibly be manned, may be manned immediately by withdrawing the seamen from every other service. At the beginning of the present war, France attempted to do this in some degree, by totally abandoning the fisheries, the best nursery of seamen, and diminishing every commercial branch of her navigation. It was, indeed, intended to encourage the equipment of privateers, whereby a considerable number of seamen might have been continually forming, but the dreadful mortality which took place in the fleet under M. d'Orvilliers, in 1779, frustrated this intention. Privateers were then deprived of their crews, and since that time it is only by particular permission and favour that seamen could be obtained to equip either privateers or merchant vessels; no nursery of seamen therefore remains, and yet a very great supply is wanted from time to time in the French navy, through the practice of crowding an unusual number on board their ships of war, whereby a greater proportion are killed in action, and perish by contagious diseases. Spain is equally destitute of resources to supply the waste of her seamen, and therefore the maritime power of both nations must hereafter rapidly decline, and that of France would be almost annihilated, if a continental war should supervene. On the other hand, the British

navy is becoming every day more formidable; forty additional ships from 50 to 100 guns, besides a much greater number of frigates, are now on the stocks, and when ready may be all manned, because the British government, under its greatest embarrassments, has preserved every resource and nursery for seamen untouched; the fisheries, coasting trade, and other branches of navigation have been all maintained, and an incredible number of privateers continually employed, the crews of which may all be transferred into ships of war, whenever it becomes necessary, so that the marine of Great-Britain, by increasing on one hand, whilst that of France and Spain diminish on the other, will soon become greatly superior to both; and when this happens, you need not, I think, be told the consequences. You will doubtless hear in America, as usual, that Great-Britain is exhausted, divided, and discouraged, but such accounts are as fallacious now as they were formerly. This might be demonstrated by many facts, but I think it will not appear doubtful, when you recollect the immense sum that was subscribed in England for the service of the present year, and that the British Court, far from fearing new enemies, not only attacked the Dutch, but has since refused the mediation of Russia in making a separate peace with that republic. It has long been fashionable in America to rail at the British government, as being not only wicked, but weak and incapable. These imputations are, however, certainly repugnant to facts, for it must be confessed that none of the belligerent powers has displayed so much vigor and ability as Great-Britain in prosecuting the war; and though we may incline to shut our eyes against the truth, a great part even of the French nation is just and generous enough to acknowledge and admire the superior fortitude and intelligence with which the British government has hitherto repelled and frustrated the efforts of enemies so much more numerous. Indeed, there never was a period in which the resources,

bravery, and real greatness of the British nation were more eminently displayed than at this time. But having discarded the remembrance of former friendships, that "*pride in the glorious achievements of our common ancestors*," and that "*affection for the heirs of their virtues*," which Congress itself but a few years since boasted of, we may be unwilling to admit this truth; it will not, however, cease to be the truth. The sun will shine whether we open or shut our eyes. Thinking ourselves alone almost able to resist Great-Britain, we very confidently inferred that the force of France joined to ours would become irresistible; but we found ourselves mistaken. When Spain joined in the war, we formed similar expectations, and they likewise proved fallacious. The same hopes will, doubtless, be entertained in America from the addition of Holland; and they will, I am persuaded, prove equally delusive. The British Ministers certainly think they have more to gain than to lose by the Dutch war, and hitherto events have confirmed that opinion; but, should it hereafter prove erroneous, they will be able at any time to make a separate peace with that Republic, so that at best we can have no dependence on any foreign assistance but that of France and Spain; and the latter, being no way committed on our side, may at any time make a separate peace as well as Holland. Indeed, I have already shewn it to be probable not only that Spain, but that France also, will soon relinquish the contest. Should both, however, persevere, we cannot expect a successful issue. We have seen that the united forces of both during two years, in which they were the most formidable, have proved unavailing, even when our credit and resources were inexhausted. How, then, can we expect success hereafter, when the forces of France and Spain are declining, and our own faith and credit irretrievably ruined, our paper money, the most important of all our resources, for ever destroyed, several of the southern States already conquered,

many of our countrymen disaffected, and many more wearied and discouraged by the long continuance and hopeless appearance of the war, accompanied with a multitude of difficulties which I need not mention to you, but which utterly preclude the least probability of our being able finally to continue an independent people? If this be evident, as I flatter myself it is, we are next to enquire whether the establishment of an independent government, were it practicable, would not be injurious rather than beneficial to us. But a few years have elapsed since you, and, I believe, every other American, were firmly convinced that the peace, freedom, and happiness of America could in no way be promoted so well, and secured, as by a dependence on the British Crown. We were then sensible of the "*inestimable advantages of a free English constitution of government.*" We publicly ascribed our amazing increase and prosperity to its "*protection and encouraging influence,*" and declared that "*we should ever esteem an union with the people of England to be our greatest glory and our greatest happiness.*" Had the British Government at that period threatened to withdraw its protection from us, and abandon us to that very independency for which we are now suffering and sacrificing so much, we should have been universally alarmed, and have considered ourselves as menaced with the severest punishment. Recollect the unanimous opinion of that time, and compare it with what has since been taught and believed on this subject in America, and then let me ask you whether this change of opinion be the work of reason and experience, or of exasperation and madness? And whether the sober, unanimous conviction under which we and our fathers had happily lived, and which our experience had invariably confirmed, is not more likely to be well founded than any sentiments which the rage and animosity of civil war have produced, and which have never been brought to any fair, dispassionate examination or trial? Should I ask the advocates of inde-

pendency what benefits they expect which we did not, and might not again, enjoy without it, I should probably be told freedom of legislation and of commerce. It seems, however, to me that on both these subjects we are deceiving ourselves. There are few, if any, benefits which we have not their attendant disadvantages. There may be too little, as well as too much, restraint in the making of laws ; and the former excess is full as mischievous and liable to abuse as the latter. In those which were called Royal governments, the exercise of the King's prerogative may have sometimes prevented wholesome laws ; but, on the other hand, it has also prevented the people from injurious ones ; and if we were to review the legislative acts of the several states since the revolution, we should find that the facility in making laws has produced a multitude of hasty and injudicious, not to say pernicious, ones ; and that the number of these has been greatest in the States where the fewest restraints attend acts of legislation respecting the freedom of commerce. I think we have formed mistaken ideas of its benefits, and that we have not sufficiently considered in how few instances we have really suffered any considerable disadvantage by being restrained in our trade with foreign nations, and how very little we shall gain by an exemption from those restraints.

Among all the nations in Europe there is certainly none where commerce is so reputable, or where it is carried on by men of so much fortune, probity, and honour, as in Great Britain ; and, consequently, there is no where an American merchant could obtain the same credit, or be served with the same fidelity, as in England ; and certainly the British manufactures exceed those of any other country in goodness and cheapness, excepting only a few articles, the greatest part of which, by means of drawbacks on exportation, may be obtained from England almost as cheap as from the countries where they are made. And on the other hand, if we were restrained from

carrying some of our own productions to foreign countries, the people of England were, in most cases, restrained from buying the like productions of foreigners; so that we had all the advantages of a monopoly, and, in general, a much better price than we could have obtained any where else, besides large bounties on our iron, naval stores, and other articles. Should we be deprived of these advantages and bounties, precluded from the privileges of British subjects, and made liable to the alien's duty, a trade with foreign nations on such terms as they might chuse to grant us, would, I think, prove an unusual compensation, and we should be soon desirous of returning again to our former restraints, accompanied with our former privileges. This is, however, but a partial view of the subject. Absolute freedom of legislation and commerce, or, in other words, independency, can never be maintained without fleets, armies, ministers of state, ambassadors, boards of war, of admiralty, of treasury, and many other expensive establishments of a sovereign independent government. We have heretofore enjoyed, and may again enjoy, the benefits of all these establishments, as well as the protection of the British fleets and armies, without any other contribution or burthen than what resulted from a few unimportant restraints on our trade, and certainly an exemption from those restraints can never afford any advantages equivalent to the taxes which the people of America must necessarily bear to support independency, should it be established, not to mention what must be paid to discharge the enormous public debt already incurred, and which remains to be incurred by a prosecution of the war. And should we after all succeed, it will only be to set up and become subjects of a state which, as being the youngest republic, must take the lowest rank among the nations of the earth, instead of continuing, as we were, members of "an *Empire*, which (to use the words of Congress) *has been the envy and admiration of ages.*" These, how-

ever, are but a few of the evils to be expected from our independency. You, my friend, know so much of history, and of mankind in general, as well as of our countrymen in particular, that a little reflection must convince you that the democratic governments lately formed in America are far from being suited to the people there. I need not remind you of the tumultuous disorder, ingratitude, violence, and injustice which, in all ages and parts of the world, have attended this species of government. I can only say, that if it can be advantageous to any societies of men, it is only to those which are small, and uncorrupted by luxury or vice. Our own colony of Connecticut has, I believe, experienced the best effects which a Democratical government is capable of producing; but these effects have resulted wholly from the rigid morals, frugality, and industry of the people. And we must not forget that in the adjoining colony of Rhode-Island, the very same government was attended with much anarchy, faction, licentious disorder, and injustice. And if we consider the late progress of luxury, immorality, and vice, and the decline of public virtue among our countrymen, there will appear but too much reason to fear that the Democratical Government, established in the united states will produce the same dreadful effects which the history of the world informs us they have invariably produced in every large society or government where they have been established. But the intestine disorders that may arise within each particular state among its own inhabitants, are not the only mischiefs to be expected. Greater evils, if possible, are to be apprehended, from the contentions of different states with each other. Considering the various manners, prejudices, and prepossessions of the people of the several states, and their discordant opinions, claims, and pretensions, it seems impossible that confederation can long subsist, or that we can long remain at peace with each other, when relieved from the present war with Great-Britain. Hitherto



the different states have voted supplies according to the allotments and requisitions of Congress, but there is not a single state which has not protested against these allotments as being unequal, and claimed future retribution. To allot the portions of public expence to each of the several states with exact justice, will always be a difficult task, on account of their continually varying circumstances; but when these allotments are made as justly as possible, it is not probable they will ever be satisfactory to all, so that from hence a fruitful source of future discord will arise. Virginia claims to itself almost all the valuable uncultivated lands adjoining to the united states, and is rapidly selling them; other states protest against the injustice of this claim. Virginia and Pennsylvania have already been nearly engaged in hostilities on account of their boundaries; and hostilities were, sometime ago, actually begun between Pennsylvania and Connecticut on the same account, and are now only suspended by the more urgent necessity of resisting the arms of Great-Britain. There are similar disputes between New-York, Massachusetts-Bay, and New-Hampshire, which, though now dormant, would immediately revive, should peace and independency be established in America. I had almost forgot the inhabitants of several inferior districts, who assume a right of separating from the colonies, or states, to which they have hitherto belonged, in the same manner as those colonies have separated from Great-Britain, and of being admitted into the confederation as distinct independent states. One of these states in particular (that of Vermont) is secretly abetted by some of the New-England states against New-York; and though Congress has undertaken the decision, it dares not decide against the claim and pretensions of the people. In short, the sources of internal commotion and civil war between the several states are so numerous and plentiful that it does not seem possible for peace and union long to subsist among them, or that evils, even

greater than those we have suffered since the declaration of Independency, should be avoided after the establishment of it. The protecting, mediating, and restraining influence or power of some other nation is indispensably necessary to our well being, and certainly there is no other nation on earth so well suited to this purpose by religion, manners, language, government, &c., or on which we can so honourably and advantageously depend as Great-Britain.

If, then, there be no probability of finally establishing the Independency we have declared, and if the establishment of it be more likely to prove pernicious than beneficial to us, what obstacle or objection is there to prevent our renouncing the beneficial claim, and reconciling ourselves again to the parent country? Of all the various objections that have been made on this subject at different times and by different people, there are but two which deserve the smallest notice. The first of these is, that the solemn acts and declarations of the King and Parliament of Great Britain are not to be relied upon; that when we shall have laid down our arms, former pretensions may be revived and new acts of Parliament made to subject our rights, &c. If there be any force in this objection, it will operate even more strongly against negotiating for peace than for reconciliation. A treaty of peace would be an act of the crown only, and might be more easily evaded than a solemn compact, in which the Parliament as well as the King would be a party. Those, therefore, who, from apprehensions of this nature, refuse treating for reconciliation, should not think of treating for peace; they should resolve to prosecute the war with unrelenting fury; to reprobate the folly of Congress in sending Mr. Adams to negotiate with Great-Britain; they should forget how often that nation has interposed to save the civil and religious liberties of other countries against the ambitious views of France and Spain, and, regardless of the danger of falling under the power of these our new friends,

they should resolve never to sheathe the sword until the British nation is exterminated. In this, and only in this way, they will act consistently, and reconcile their actions to that distrust which they profess to entertain of the national faith of Great-Britain. Wise, impartial men will, however, think that objections of this nature come with very little propriety from the people of America, who, as an independent people, are too young, and even already have shewn too little regard for their own national faith, to have a right to distrust that of others; and especially of a nation so long distinguished by a faithful adherence to its engagements, and which, even at this moment, enjoys the confidence of Europe more than any other, as is manifested by the readiness with which the people of all countries, even of France itself, still lend and confide their money to the British government, notwithstanding its embarrassments. But what renders this objection more contemptible is, that it proceeds from those very men who were most active in evading and violating the most solemn engagements and the most sacred obligations of justice respecting the redemption and value of the Congress bills of credit. The last objection against a reconciliation with Great-Britain is, that it would be repugnant to our engagements with France, and, consequently, dishonorable and ungratefull in us. No man can be more jealous of the honor of America, or more zealous in its support, than I was, so long as even the semblance of it promoted our public measures; but my jealousy and zeal were naturally extinguished when Congress, on the 18th of March, 1780, committed that very act which, but six months before, they had unanimously and publicly reprobated as "*execrable deed*," an "*unpardonable sin*," and which, by their own judgment and sentence, would justly "*render us a reproach and a bye-word among the nations of the Earth*," and make us "*appear like a common prostitute among chaste and respectable matrons, &c.*" Such being our situation, such our crime and pun-

ishment, according to the decision and sentence of our own representative, I do not conceive that any deviation from our engagements with France can add to our national dishonor; nor can I, indeed, discover any way to escape this dishonor and infamy, but by deserting that independency which we have so disgracefully perverted, and blending ourselves again with the British nation; but I would not, even for so desirable a purpose, commend an unjustifiable departure from our treaties with France. It has already been demonstrated that the French government considers itself as at liberty to desert us at the end of an unsuccessful war, and, consequently, we must be entitled to the same liberty, and to the same interpretation of our engagements. Should we continue independent, our treaties with France ought to be most sacredly fulfilled; but we never could have intended by those treaties to bind ourselves *eternally* to fight for independency, even when the attainment of it becomes evidently impossible; and, when through our own incapacity, it is more likely to prove injurious than beneficial to us. Such an engagement, had we even been insane enough to make, would be null, because it would be contrary to the first laws and duties of nature. Politicians do not generally feel or expect much from sentiments of national gratitude, yet I am far from wishing that my countrymen should become ungrateful. I have been, as you well know, most ready to magnify our obligation to the French, as well from my personal regard to that nation as from a persuasion that the appearance of gratitude on our side would produce beneficial effects. I was willing even to err by an excess of grateful sentiments towards our new ally, so long as that excess appeared harmless; but when a claim on our gratitude is set up and opposed to the peace and happiness of millions, it becomes proper, at least, to enquire if it is well founded. In what, let me ask, are we obliged to France? She scarcely knew a single individual of our country, and therefore could

not have been actuated by any motive of regard for us at the time when she began to afford us secret assistance. It is with reluctance that I enter on the discussion of this question, even privately, with you ; but it is as easy as it is expedient to ascertain the views of the French government and its conduct towards us. Envious as well as apprehensive of the rapid increase of the British wealth and power, a ruinous contest between different parts of the British empire was naturally viewed with particular satisfaction ; and to prolong this contest, with all its destructive consequences, it was thought politic to assist the weakest side, which was ours ; enmity towards the British nation, and not a regard for us was the prevailing motive. In similar circumstances as much assistance would have been given to any other people under heaven, and there can be no cause for gratitude for any aid given in such circumstances, and with such views. The first plan of the French government evidently was to assist us just so far as might be absolutely necessary to prevent an accommodation, and to give this assistance with so much secrecy as to avoid any rupture with Great Britain. On this plan succours were first permitted to be dealt out to us by private individuals, and only on condition of future payment ; but afterwards we were thought to be such cheap and effectual instruments of mischief to the British nation, that more direct and gratuitous aids were afforded us. These were, however, soon discovered, and frequently complained of by the British government, and as often denied by that of France. The whole of the year 1777 passed in a succession of complaints from Lord Stormont on one side, and of solemn denials, accompanied with the most friendly protestations and assurances from the French minister, on the other. Each complaint produced a temporary suspension of our succours and a new contrivance for secretly conveying them to America, and eluding the vigilance of the British minister. While the French court was

thus violating its engagements and promises to Great-Britain, it does not appear to have ever expected or desired that we should become independent, but, on the contrary, to have always had in view and contemplation the time when we were to be subdued and left at the mercy of Great Britain, and when it would be highly dangerous for us to possess any evidence of the assistance we had received, or of the fallacy of those amicable assurances and protestations which had been so often repeated to the British Ambassador; and accordingly all intercourse between the French minister and us passed by means and channels suited to the views I have just described. No written proof of the least importance was ever left in our hands. Even Mr. Gerard's letters appointing occasional interviews with us were always without any signature; and though five hundred thousand livres were quarterly paid to our Banker from the Royal Treasury, not the smallest evidence of the source from whence that subsidy came was permitted to remain in our power. So much precaution did not pass unnoticed by us at that period. I saw clearly, and with concern, that it was dictated by a persuasion that we should be finally subdued by the arms of Great-Britain, and an intention finally to desert and disown having ever had any connection with us. Towards the end of the summer, 1777, this Court seems to have thought the time near for so abandoning and disavowing us. The capture of Ticonderoga and the progress of General Burgoyne's army on one side, with the victory at the Brandywine and the taking of Philadelphia on the other, convinced the French Ministers that the period of our resistance would soon come, and make them solicitous to remove every impression which the assistance previously given to us might have been made on the British Government. Amicable protestations and assurances were therefore renewed with unusual fervour; and least words alone should be insufficient, they proceeded to important and effectual acts of complaisance. Ameri-

can armed vessels were every where arrested and detained in the French ports, and afterwards only permitted to sail under engagements to return home without committing any act of hostility in the European Seas. Two valuable Jamaica ships taken by American privateers, and brought to Nantz, were wrested from the captors and restored to their former British owners. Injunctions *of a nature not to be disobeyed* were sent to all the ports affording us any supply of military stores, &c., and, to gratify Lord Stormont, the Captain of the ship Amphitrite was thrown into prison for having carried such stores to America, though with the privity and approbation of this Court. The principal actor in this affair was under the greatest apprehensions and alarm for his own safety when a messenger arrived with the news of General Burgoyne's army having surrendered to that of General Gates. The news allayed his fears, and stopped those proceedings by which the French government had already manifested its intentions to disown and abandon us. The impression which this news made in England, and the intention announced in Parliament of soon offering the most liberal terms to America, produced a sudden change in the conduct and policy of this Court respecting us. It was perceived, or at least believed, that nothing short of an open declaration in our favour would protract the quarrel or prevent our reconciliation with Great Britain; and it was apprehended that, when reconciled, both countries might turn their force against France, England from resentment for what had been done, and America for what had been refused for our support. The French Ministry then appeared for the first time to think seriously of promoting a final separation between us and our parent country, being convinced from the strength which we had manifested in singly resisting the power of Great Britain, and the general discouragement which notoriously prevailed in that nation, that such a separation might

be effected with but little difficulty, and no danger to France.

The proposals of Congress therefore, which had been left twelve months unnoticed, were suddenly accepted and the treaties speedily concluded, and afterwards hastily announced to the world, in order to frustrate the pacific endeavours of the British Government, and engage us to reject its liberal offers for promoting a reconciliation. Having been personally engaged in concluding and signing the treaties with France, and personally favoured and obliged to its Government, and being also persuaded, as I then was, that those treaties would prove infinitely beneficial to our country, I very naturally approved of their ratification, and of the rejection of all terms offered by the British Commissioners. Situated as I then was, and thinking as I then did, it was impossible for me to act otherwise ; but yet I shall for ever regret that a majority of our countrymen were not wise enough to know and pursue their true interests, and to accept of offers which contained every thing conducive to their future peace and prosperity, and which, had they been accepted, would have saved us and our parent country innumerable calamities, and have preserved thousands of useful lives, with oceans of kindred blood, which have been since offered up as a sacrifice to our idol, Independency. Unhappily that time and opportunity were irrecoverably lost, and all regrets must necessarily prove unavailing. It now only remains with us to employ all our thoughts and faculties in repairing the mischiefs that are past, and stopping their future progress.

In examining the motives and views of the French ministry, there appears no reason to believe that the change in its system and policy towards us, and the treaties thereby produced, were the effect of a regard for our country, any more than the preceding resolution to disown and abandon us had been. In every variation of conduct, this Ministry, like true politicians, pursued what they considered as the interests of their



country, regardless of ours ; and though I have no desire to censure them for acting from such motives, I cannot admit that any just title to our gratitude can be from thence derived. If we proceed to review what has passed since the treaties were announced, we shall doubtless find abundant reason to form the same conclusion. By your station in Congress you must have I cannot believe, after mature consideration, that they have been such as to lay our country under any great load of obligation. I do not mean, like Mr. J. Adams, to assert that "France has broken, or at least not fulfilled the terms of her alliance with us ;" though, between ourselves, I cannot but think there is some foundation for such an assertion, by the letter, as well as the spirit. of the treaty, the first article of which says, "If war should break out between France and Great-Britain during the continuance of the present war between the United States and England, his Majesty and the United States shall make it a *"common cause, and aid each other mutually with their good offices, their councils and their forces, according to the exigence of conjunctures, as becomes good and faithful allies."*

It is to be remembered, that before France entered into the war, we had alone supported a very unequal contest with Great-Britain for near three years, and had thereby incurred an enormous debt, and nearly exhausted all our credit and resources. It might therefore have been expected, from the terms of our engagement, that, instead of continuing to bear an unequal share of the burthen, our own proportion would have been lightened by our ally, in consideration of what we had previously done and suffered alone. But has this been in any degree the case? Is it even true that France has since, in proportion to her superior wealth and numbers, borne a just share of the war? No enemy has ravaged or even landed within this kingdom ; no

new tax has been levied to support the war. Almost every thing expended is the fruit of economy, and has been employed in building and sustaining a formidable navy, and particular care has been used to expose it as little as possible, in order that it may remain entire at the end of the war. The same principle which has furnished the means, appears, likewise, to direct the operations of the war on this side, whilst England and America have been wasting their strength and resources against each other. Very strong and early representations were, as you know, made, and from time to time repeated, to this government, respecting the disorder of our finances, and the absolute impossibility of supporting the war, unless our ally would either lend, or assist us in borrowing, considerable sums of money ; but these representations produced no effect, altho' France has, from the beginning, always been able to borrow with so much facility, that there could have been no difficulty in affording us sufficient pecuniary aid, if the inclination to do it had not been wanting. It is not until since the alarming revolt of the Pennsylvania and Jersey troops, that this government could ever be brought to promise a single shilling towards paying the army in America, and the sum now granted is placed under the direction of General Washington in a way that manifests a total want of confidence in Congress, and renders the General in effect independent of the body by whom he is commissioned, and who will not dare either to dismiss, or even to disoblige, him, because without his concurrence the army cannot obtain a single shilling. You can best decide whether Congress has deserved this distrust, not to say insult, but if that body has deserved this, it certainly does not merit the confidence of America ; and, in either case, the preference shewn to General Washington seems likely to produce dangerous jealousies, to say no more. The esteem which I have long entertained for him precludes every suspicion that he will adopt, or become the instrument of, any improper design. But this reference will doubtless be

considered and represented in America as indicating an intention in this government to attach General Washington to the interests of France, and to support him against all opposition ; and it is easy to conceive the animosities likely to result from such apprehensions.

Respecting the sea and land forces sent at different times to America, they doubtless were never suited nor intended to drive the British forces out of the United States. Probably this government thinks that so great a part of the British forces can no where be employed and wasted so advantageously for France as in fighting against the people of America, where they can do no harm to the French nation, and where we are under the necessity of opposing them ; but were the British fleets and armies transferred from the continent to the West-India Islands, it would depend on our inclination whether we followed them or not ; and in either case, but especially in the latter, the French and Spanish possessions would be in imminent danger. These reasons sufficiently explain why, in truth, the French Government never did nor will make any effectual efforts to drive the English from New-York, &c. Respecting the fleet and army sent last year to Rhode-Island, under the command of Mons. de Ternay and Mons. de Rochambeau, you who were in Congress need not be told the purpose for which they were professed to be sent ; and probably by this time you will be convinced that the great additional force which was promised, and of which the first sent was represented only as the van guard, was really never intended to follow, and that the true though secret object in view, was not so much to act offensively against the British forces, as to secure and hold Rhode-Island in the same manner as Queen Elizabeth held cautionary towns belonging to the Dutch. This Government has for a considerable time been apprehensive that Great-Britain might soon regain the Southern States by conquest or their own defection ; but it was also expected that the people of New England, by more vigorous and persevering

efforts, would still maintain the contest, even if all the other States should be again reduced to their former dependence on the Crown of Great-Britain. The harbour of Rhode Island is commodiously situated in the center of New England, and was therefore thought a desirable possession by the French Ministry, and a fleet and army were accordingly sent to fortify themselves and remain there, ready to favour and encourage those among us who should appear more attached to the French interest, and disposed to go the most desperate lengths against reconciliation with Great-Britain, and at the same time ready to overawe and restrain those of a contrary disposition. Indeed, any one who considers how long the French fleet and army have remained in their station at Rhode-Island without having ever received any order to engage in the smallest offensive enterprize, and that no attempt has been made to send even the smallest part of the reinforcements promised, must conclude that this fleet and army were not sent to America for our sakes, so much as to gain an advantageous strong hold in our country, and a controlling influence over the people there, in order to prevent our reconciliation with Great-Britain, until we shall both have so far weakened and ruined each other, that France, with a formidable navy *carefully preserved*, will at the close of the war have nothing to fear, whatever becomes of us or of our independency. Many other facts might be adduced, but they cannot be necessary to support this general representation of the policy and views of France towards us, and to invalidate every claim which may be made from thence on our gratitude. If it be, then, true that there is no validity in either of these objections, nor any probability of finally establishing our independency, and if the establishment of it would more likely prove prejudicial than beneficial to us, it is high time to reflect on our situation, and instantly terminate the destructive contest in which we are engaged. Dr. Franklin's sentiments on the separation of America from Great-Britain, even after the

declaration of independency, are very plainly as well as forcibly expressed in his letter to Lord Howe: "Long (says this venerable patriot) did I endeavour, with unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to preserve from breaking that fine and noble China Case—the British Empire; for I knew that, being once broken, *the separate parts could not retain their share of the strength and value that existed in the whole*; and that a perfect re-union of those parts could scarce ever be hoped for." I know of nothing that has occurred since the date of that letter to induce Doctor Franklin to change his private sentiments on this subject. It is true that at that time a re-union, though devoutly to have been wished for, could scarce be hoped or expected, so long as every original cause of the separation still existed, and were so many obstacles in the way of the wished for re-union; but those having been since removed, and America having fatally experienced "*that, separate, it does not retain even its share of that strength and value which existed in the whole,*" on the Doctor's own principles, a re-union ought to be hoped for and endeavoured after with *unfeigned and unwearied zeal* by him and by every friend to America. If our own future prosperity requires that we be again united to Great-Britain, and if, through inability to resist, we must eventually return to that nation, it is both parricide and suicide to employ and waste our strength and blood for the destruction of a country which is shortly to become ours, and to which we must hereafter resort for protection and support against those to whom we are now attached, and whose battles we are fighting. But besides the folly and wickedness, we ought to reflect on the danger of such conduct; for if we cannot finally withstand Great-Britain, nothing can be more hazardous than to provoke her resentment by an obstinate and desperate resistance. If the United States persist in rejecting all overtures for a reconciliation, and be finally conquered after mischievously protracting the evils of civil war as long as possible, what favour and indulgence can they reasonably expect? These consider-

ations are of the utmost importance to our future well-being, and wretched will our condition doubtless become, should they be much longer disregarded.

The causes which first occasioned the civil war have long ceased to exist, the acts complained of have been repealed, all rights of taxing us solemnly renounced by the British Parliament, and offers made to us, at different times, more than equivalent to all that was originally demanded by our delegates in Congress. We, therefore, no longer contend for our rights, but for *Sovereign Dominion* for a new object, to which we had originally no claim, and which even after the commencement of hostilities, we most solemnly professed to hold in aversion and abhorrence. This is the idol which, in the days of peace, and under the empire of reason, we beheld with sentiments of detestation ; but which, in the rage and phrenzy of civil war, we have set up and worshipped. This is the false divinity whose votaries we have become, and on whose altars we daily offer up the dearest of all sacrifices, the peace and prosperity of our country, and the blood of our nearest relations and friends. To labour in curing this madness, and in exciting forgiveness, peace, and brotherly love among the contending parts of the British empire, would certainly be a most laudable and meritorious employment ; and never did any contest afford so many reasons for charity and mutual forgiveness as the present. "*To err is human,*" but in case of error, be it on either side, is peculiarly entitled to indulgence from the other ; the cause of this dispute having been so intricate, and the question of rights so doubtful, that the wisest and best men would not avoid thinking differently about them. Those, therefore, who unrelentingly cherish vindictive resentments on this subject, and deny forgiveness to each other, will have very little reason to ask or expect it of Heaven. Let us, then, exert our utmost efforts in promoting peace and reconciliation ; if we accelerate these blessings, if we contribute to revive "*transcendent relations*" that formerly subsisted between us and our

parent country, we shall deserve the applauses of present and future generations, and in every event we shall, at least, secure the approbation of our own consciences. I pretend not to know exactly the terms on which a reconciliation might now be effected, every overture from Great-Britain having been treated with insult, and considered by us as a proof of her weakness and our own strength. No encouragement has been left to further offers ; on her part enough, however, has already been offered to afford a basis for safe and honorable negotiation ; and I am fully persuaded that every thing which we ought to desire, every thing consistent with our own and the general good of the empire may be finally obtained, if we do not neglect the present opportunity, and wait till conquest supersedes all negotiation. It never can be the interest of Great-Britain to deny our reasonable demands, because it can never be beneficial to her to govern a people so remote, and so rapidly increasing, by force ; and on our parts we should recall and regulate our demands by those sentiments which Congress professed even after the commencement of hostilities. "Our breasts," said they, "retain too tender a regard for the kingdom from which we derive our origin, to renew such a reconciliation as might, in any manner, be inconsistent with her dignity or her welfare ; these, related as we are to her, *honour and duty*, as well as inclination, induce us to support and advance." Every thing which we can ask consistently with these sentiments, will not, I am confident, be denied us. Respecting the first measures towards a negotiation with the British government, they must, I think, begin among the people at large, in the same manner as the first steps towards the present contest originated. If the people in general be made sensible of the mischiefs and dangers attending the present pursuit of independency, they will naturally assemble as formerly, in town meetings, &c., and by suitable resolutions will procure instructions from their several assemblies to their delegates in Congress, for promoting a

negociation and reconciliation with the parent country. And if it should appear that a majority of the states is not inclined to negotiate, in that case they never can be in doubt about suitable ways and means to treat separately.

If these facts and observations appear to you well founded, I beg you will employ them in such way as may be best suited to promote the salutary purposes of this letter. I do not, however, wish that any part of it should at this time be ascribed to me, unless there may be more necessity for it than I can at present conceive of. I shall, however, acquiesce in every thing you may think expedient in this respect, as I am confident that, though our countrymen may not be yet prepared for these truths, the time cannot be distant in which they will be universally admitted, and when, recovering from our present delirium, we shall reflect with anguish of mind on the blessings we have lost and the miseries we have suffered by our pursuit of independency. When that period arrives, we shall equally regret and wonder at our infatuation in desiring to separate from a people to whom we were connected by all the ties of consanguinity, mutual affection, and interest ; by similarity of religion, laws, manners, and language ; and generally by every thing fitted to bind mankind to each other ; a people justly celebrated above all others for civil and religious liberty, for public and private virtues, for philosophy, science, and arts, and generally for all that exalts and adorns human nature ; and we shall no less regret and wonder that in thus breaking the " bonds of law, loyalty, faith, and blood," in thus discarding all remembrance of former benefits, all "*pride in the glorious achievements of our common ancestors, and all affection for the heirs of their virtues,*" and separating from an empire which (by our own confession) "*has been the envy and admiration of ages,*" we should, at the same time, unite ourselves to, and render ourselves virtually dependent on, a nation and government which we and our fathers have considered as hereditarily inimical to us,



to our religion, and to every species of freedom. As I have devoted this letter solely to reflections on the public affairs of our country, and have already made it so long, I will not add to it by saying any thing more than that I am, with the most sincere respect and friendship,  
Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

To the Honourable Jesse Root, Esq.,  
Member of Congress, Philadelphia.

*The Royal Gazette, Nov. 24th, 28th, and Dec. 1st, 1781.*

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TO BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.\*

Paris, May 20th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of September last did not come to hand until a few days since. Its detention is to me perfectly unaccountable. You ask me what I think of our affairs and what will be the issue of them. Thinking in the manner I do, silence on the subject would be prudence, at least, in me; but it would not be acting the friendly and open part towards you. In a word, I think that our affairs were never at any period in a worse situation than at present, and that the issue of the war, if continued much longer, will be in the ruin and slavery of our country. You may be assured that England is determined, on no consideration, nor in any circumstances whatever, to admit of our independency. That nation is neither exhausted nor dispirited; its energy, resources, and national character never appeared in a greater and more striking point of view than at this time. You are not to suppose that all the powers of Europe have deserted Great-Britain and become indifferent to the fate of a nation which at different periods has relieved and defended most of them when in the most imminent danger them-

\* One of the intercepted letters; see *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.

selves ; nor have you any ground to conclude, as too many rashly do, that because no power in Europe has as yet declared for England, that, therefore, they all (at least secretly) wish us success. There is no nation at this day in Europe, except England, in which the subjects are in reality anything more than the property of government ; for, except that *arbitrary and tyrannical nation* of Great-Britain, they are no where entitled to any share in the legislation. The government of Holland, about which you have heard so much and know so little, is included in the above description, being a absolute aristocracy, the members of which are not chosen by the people, but by those who compose the aristocracy. That government is, in its nature, as despotic as any in Europe, but, fortunately for its subjects, the genius of commerce protects them from the baneful effects of despotism. They think they are free. They have not experienced the contrary, and, until lately, have been happy. But is it not surprising that we should imagine that monarchs who hold their own subjects in chains should, from motives of disinterested generosity and the love of liberty, assist a people in their revolt from a government infinitely milder than their own ? A people whose first and favorite position is that all men are by nature equal ? Reflect coolly for a moment if the sounding epithets of *great, good, generous, disinterested ally*, protector of the liberties of mankind, &c., will protect you, and then answer me. Few nations ever engaged in war but from motives of ambition, interest, or revenge. The latter is notoriously the sole motive in Spain for the present. Her interest is incompatible with our independency in every point in which it can be viewed. Spain is sensible of this, and therefore will not acknowledge us. Can it be believed that an arbitrary, despotic, and jealous monarchy can wish to see a mighty empire of confederated republics, whose religion, genius, and form of government are directly the reverse to, and naturally at war with, theirs, established in the neighbourhood of all its

treasures? at the doors of its unarmed and enervated colonies? But Holland is also at war with England. Rather say that England is at war with Holland, for the latter has not as yet made a single reprisal; but if the States of Holland enter seriously into the war, they will not do it on our account, nor will they take any part in our affairs. They have told Mr. Adams so in plain but modest terms repeatedly. They are not so much interested against our independency as Spain, but they are far from being interested to have it established. Every other power to the North are interested in a greater or less degree against us, the natural produce of their country being the same as ours. As to those to the South, they must naturally be indifferent to our fate, except Portugal, which is essentially affected by what affects England, and is, of course, as great an enemy to our independency as England can be; but the Southern powers, Spain excepted, are of very little importance in the present subject. If I were to hazard a conjecture, it would be that the Emperor of Germany & Empress of Russia will ultimately take part with England and decide the contest, and that the terms of peace will finally be dictated by them. If we continue to reject all overtures until such an event arrives, unconditional submission will be our fate; but, if those and all the other Powers in Europe remain peaceable spectators of the war, it does not follow that Great-Britain must fall. Her naval power and resources are equal to those of all her enemies, and the war being solely maritime, the event must be uncertain. Great-Britain is undoubtedly able to support the war for several years to come, and she is, at all events, resolved to hazard every thing sooner than yield to our independency; but suppose the war continued for two years longer, and suppose at that period the resources and maritime power of Great-Britain exhausted and broken, her credit lost, and general bankruptcy and despair throughout her dominions, and, finding no friend to interfere, that she is obliged to receive the law from her enemies.

This may afford a triumph for us for a moment, before our resentments have time to cool, but when we have laid down our arms and become cool enough to look round and examine our situation, we shall find that we have purchased this triumph at the price of the peace, safety, and liberty of our country ; we shall by that time find our country exhausted and ravaged, an immense national debt on us, and the expences of our civil government and public departments so greatly increased that the burthen of the whole will be unsupportable. The war has already cost us more than thirty millions sterling, if justice were to be done to every one, and though by the breach of public faith, and the highest act of national injustice and despotism ever known, it is liquidated at much less, yet two years continuance of the war will leave us near that sum in debt. The new established government will cost us ten times more than the old ever did. We now expend near 20,000l. sterling annually on foreign embassies and agencies ; at the peace these establishments must be enlarged, as well as the expence. Congress must be supported in a certain dignity, Boards of Treasury, of Marine, of Commerce, &c., must be established with salaries sufficient to induce men of abilities to serve. Consuls in the different foreign ports must be appointed, a marine force must be kept up to a certain degree, or our flag will not be respected nor our commerce protected in any part of the world. In short, from the best calculations I can make, the expences of our public government will greatly exceed 100,000l. sterling annually, independent of the expences of the government of each particular State, which will necessarily be increased ; and if justice be done our officers and soldiers in their half pay, the expences of our new public government only will be at least 300,000l. sterling annually. The proportion of the public debt to Connecticut, supposing that State to share one equal thirteenth of the whole, will exceed two millions sterling. That state is the best able to pay taxes of any in the confederation ; will it be able to pay

the interest only of such a sum, and its proportion of the public current expences, in addition to those of their private government? You know it is impossible. Will the States, when peace leaves local prejudices, ancient jealousies, and every other seed of contention at liberty to spring up and operate, will they agree in the partition of their public debts and expences, in the share of vacant lands, of emoluments and offices? In short, will they agree in any thing? Will the honest Farmers in Connecticut be contented to find, that after they have suffered so much in a war professedly undertaken to free them from taxes and impositions, that their lands have become mortgaged nearly to their value? Will not discontent prevail universally in the States, between each other, and among the individuals of each, and will the Democratic system we have adopted have sufficient energy to govern so extensive a continent, uneasy and convulsed in every part? Will it be able to prevent universal Anarchy, that natural child of Democracy in every age and nation of the world? If ever a state was calculated for Democracy, it must have been Connecticut. An equality of fortune, the influence of religious sentiments, sober, virtuous, and frugal manners, with the small extent of territory, were all in our favour, and we and our ancestors were happy under an apparent Democracy. I say apparent, for we always beheld and acknowledged a supreme power at a distance, and complied with its requisitions; but the case will be materially different in future, if independency is established at the peace. Besides, are our manners the same as formerly? Have they been changed for the better or worse? If civil feuds and anarchy prevail, we shall lie at the mercy of any power that may be disposed to interfere; it is next to impossible but that they will not prevail, and I leave you to reflect on the consequences. But if France and Spain succeed with our assistance in ruining Great Britain, if they dictate the law to us also? They certainly will; it is not in the nature of a despotic victorious power to do otherwise;

and if they dictate the severest conditions, to whom have we to apply? No power on earth will be left to take our part, no one whom either affection or interest will induce to interfere. That great nation from whom we have so often boasted of our descent, that nation which has so often unlocked its treasures and spill'd its best blood in the defence of the rights and liberties of other nations, tho' strangers to her, will not be able to reach a helping hand to her descendants in distress; she may afford us her unavailing pity, or offer feeble entreaties on our behalf, but we have no reason to expect either. I view our situation as with Sylla on the one hand and Charybdis on the other, and our pilots drunk with the intoxicating ideas of independent sovereignty, madly pushing us into that vortex in which our peace, liberty, and safety will be swallowed up and lost for ever. If you ask me what is to be done, I say make peace immediately, on the best terms you can; the present moment is a favourable one. We are now of more weight in the scale than we can possibly be in a general treaty. At the close of the war we may then find ourselves light as the dust of the balance, at best but a meer article to be set off to either side on a general settlement of account. Mr. Sebor will write to you by this conveyance, and I leave him to inform you of Simonet's villainy and imposture in the bill which he sold you, as well as of other private matters, for I am heartily tired, and my spirits are too low to attempt a more cheerful subject at present. Wishing you success and happiness, I am, with sincere esteem and friendship, my Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble Servant,

S. DEANE.

Major Benj. Tallmadge, at Gen. Washington's Headquarters.

*The Royal Gazette, Dec. 12, 1781.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, May 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—The original of which I sent you a copy yesterday is in Mr. Grand's hands. The paper contains nothing more than what is in the copy. If you observe the date you will see that it was so soon after the purchase of the magazine, and being before you had done any thing considerable as to the disposing of it, that you will be convinced the money could neither be for rent or for advances made by Peltier. The sale of the magazine was on the 27th, of March, 1777, soon after which you made out an inventory marking the surplus or deficiency of articles beyond what was expected, for I did not purchase from any exact invoice, but generally. In the general sale, fusils, pistols, pieces of arms, sabres, and swords are mentioned, and afterwards *Outils, endurnes, bigornes, et Utenselles servant au reparation, de mes Armes, &c.* On the purchase I gave Mr. Monthieu my note of hand for the money, which was paid by a bill on Mr. Grand the 10th of May following. On overhauling the magazine many articles were found which Mr. Monthieu insisted were not included in the sale, particularly some new brass furniture, knives, &c. This occasioned some dispute. Mr. Monthieu had also paid some expences after the sale, which he claimed a reimbursement for; he also said he ought to have had his money a month sooner. You being at Paris, we verbally submitted the whole to your judgment. This is simply the history, and the cause of your being so inexplicit, as you express yourself, must have been that you considered your award as a verbal one, and had no expectations that the certificate given by you would be preserved; nor is it probable that it would, had I not in my hurry given Mr. Monthieu an order for the money on the back of it. The word *advance* was, I suppose, used by you to save the trouble of a particular enumeration, which would

have been both difficult and tedious, and you put directly after that word, &c., &c. I remember you said at the time that the new brass furniture was worth much more than the sum given; but Mr. Monthieu proposing to take that sum in full for the whole of his demand on these heads, you awarded it. I have been thus particular to enable you to recollect the circumstances, and to make the charge and credit as they ought to stand. I know of no blame on your part. If there is any, it lyes for my not having been more explicit at first. I am yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Jonathan Williams, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JAMES WILSON.

Paris, May 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have by some accident mislaid the receipt you gave me for the Loan Office Certificates I left with you for Sir R. Finley of Bordeaux. That gentleman will probably write you on the subject in a short time, and accompany his letter with this. I therefore pray you to pursue his directions with respect to those certificates, and to render him any services in your power, by which you will oblige a very worthy man, as well as, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. James Wilson.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO CONRAD A. GERARD.

Paris, May 30th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received the letter you honored me with the 28th, and am sorry I was not within when you



called on me. I shall be at home from 10 o'clock to one this day ; or, if more agreeable to you, will do myself the honor of calling on you on the hour you shall name. I have the honor to be, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Gerard.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN NESBITT.

Paris, May 30th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 21st, since which I have obtained a thorough search to be made in the post office here ; but Mr. Hazlehurst's letter is not to be found, and the master says it must still be at L'Orient. You may possibly discover it by a second examination, for which he will be greatly obliged to you. Pray be so kind as to inform me if Capt. Darby is bound for New England, if he wants freight, and what are his terms. I want to send out a few goods, but do not consider any adventure to the southward of Boston as safe at present. Excuse the trouble I give you, and be assured I am, with Esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Nesbitt.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SAMUEL AND J. H. DELAP.

Paris, May 30th, 1781.

DEAR SIRS,—My last was of the 5th, by Mr. McCreery, since which I am still without any of your favors. I am sensible of the multiplicity of business in which you are engaged, and therefore can make allowance for the length of time in making out your accounts ; but, apprehensive that the affair may have slipped your memory, I take liberty to remind you of

the necessity I am under of leaving Paris, and the importance it is of to the public, as well as to you and me, that those accounts should be previously closed. I am, with sincere Esteem & Attachment, Dear Sirs,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. Delap.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC HAZLEHURST.

Paris, May 30th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Since writing and enclosing to you on the 14th, your letter taken out of the post office here, have received a letter from Mr. Nesbitt, in which he says your letter put into the post office there cannot be found; that the Post Master says it must have been sent on to Paris. On this, I had the office here examined, but no such letter could be found. I am surprized at this, but know not where to look farther; but I have wrote again to Mr. Nesbitt to make a second examination. We have no news of any kind. I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Hazlehurst.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO MESSRS. CATRES AND DE BAY.

Paris, May 31st, 1781.

GENTLEMEN,—I take the liberty of presenting my son to you with this, and to pray that you would be so kind as to recommend him to some private lodging, decent, but not expensive, for the term of three or four weeks, by which time I shall do myself the honor of waiting on you in Ghent. In the meantime, I have the honor to be, with much respect, Gentlemen,

Your most Obedt. Servt.,

S. DEANE.

[Not addressed.]

*Thomas Mss.*

TO P. WRAY.

Paris, May 31st, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—My son finding an opportunity for going to Brussels will put this into the post office there for you. I am ready to enter on the speculation proposed, having engaged all the articles necessary that can be procured in France. When I was at Ghent and at Lisle, I observed their linens, and they will answer well in our market. I intend, therefore, after having given the necessary orders here, to go and make a large purchase, in which you are at liberty to become interested or not, as you shall choose. I propose setting out in about ten days, previous to which I expect to hear from you. We have nothing new.

I am, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. P. Wray.

Thomas Mss.

TO CHARLES THOMSON.\*

Paris, June 1, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—The famous Abbe Raynall has published a new edition of his *Histoire Philosophique & Politique*. The Parliament of Paris have condemned the book to be torn and burnt, his person to be seized, and his estate confiscated. The Abbe, however, had timely notice, and has fled. The Book is at present both scarce and dear, or I would send it to you. The liberties which the Abbe has taken with the Christian Religion, and with the political manœuvres of France, have caused his persecution. I am of opinion that the latter has been the principal, for it is well known that no country in Europe abounds more in Deist and Deistical writers than this. As you must be anxious to

\* One of the intercepted letters ; see *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.

know the sentiments of this celebrated and eloquent writer with respect to the American revolution, I have made a few extracts, and would gladly oblige you with more if I had time ; but having only borrowed the books, I must return them as soon as read. Speaking of our revolution he says : " Of all the energetical causes effecting so many revolutions in the world, not one of them have existed in North America. Neither religion nor the laws were outraged. Martyrs or citizens had not been massed out of their blood upon the scaffold. No insult had been committed against morality, manners, or customs, nor any thing dear to a people. Not a man had been snatched from the bosom of his family or friend to perish in the horrors of a dungeon. Public order was not inverted. The principles of administration remained unaltered, and the maxims of government continued what they ever had been. The whole amounted only to this : whether the parent country had or had not a right, directly or indirectly, to put a trifling duty on the colonies ? For the grievances accumulated in the declaration of independency amount to nothing, because the first grievance—a question nearly metaphysical—was not sufficient to justify a general commotion, and much less an insurrection, for which a country is to behold herself deprived of the hands that should have been her support, her harvests ravaged, and her fields covered with the carcases of her relations, or stained with her own blood."

On the Tender Act he says : " Were they [the Congress] ignorant that the understanding is no more to be controled than opinions ? Did they not perceive that in the present crisis every reasonable citizen was fearful of exposing his estate ? Were they not apprized that in the birth of a republic they permitted deeds of despotism unknown to countries already moulded into slavery ? "

On our alliance with France, and the transactions of that time, he says : "'Tis the reproach of the Councils of Lewis the XVIth, that they have tarnished the Majesty of the first power upon the globe, by disavowing

in the face of the universe, the succours clandestinely given to the Americans. It is a reproach that the intrigues of Ministers, or the ascendancy of certain obscure agents, have engaged the nation in a destructive war, when the springs of government should have been strengthened to heal the wounds of a reign the last half of which had been contemptible and weak, divided between plunder and disgrace, the meanness of vice, and the convulsions of arbitrary power. It is a reproach to have provoked to arms by an insidious policy, and to become entangled in speeches unworthy of France to utter to England, the language of a cowardly bravado, giving the lie to projects already formed, and the real sentiments of the heart's language, debasing him that uses it, without deceiving those to whom it is spoken, and which exposes to a disgrace profitable neither to the minister nor the nation. Why ask, then, the reason that men who have in their hands all the power of the nation, and who to be obeyed have only to speak the word of command, suffered themselves to be surprized in every sea by an enemy whose constitution necessarily compels them to be slow? Why suffer themselves by an inconsiderate treaty to be entangled in the net of a Congress that should have been held in a state of dependence for their large and regular subsidies? Europe, that has her eyes fixed upon us, beholds a grand design, and not a well-judged step to accomplish it; sees in our arsenals and in our ports immense preparations, but no execution; sees menacing fleets, and little or nothing effected; courage and bravery in individuals, in the chiefs effeminacy and irresolution; here every thing that bespeaks the strength and commanding power of a great people, and there the weakness and tardiness natural to the character and aims of the most inconsiderable. It is by this striking contradiction between our projects and our conduct, between our means and the head that directs them, that the genius of Great-Britain, stunned for a moment, recovered its vigor; and to this hour 'tis a problem for Europe to

solve, whether in declaring for America, we have not ourselves increased the strength of England."

Speaking of the motives of France on the treaty with us, he says: "In fine, philosophy, whose first sensation is a desire to see all governments just and all nations happy, in glancing an eye at this alliance of a monarchy with a people defending their liberty, looks for the motive. Too well she perceives that the felicity of mankind is no part of it. She thinks that if the love of justice had any influence upon the Court of Versailles, it would have made a part of the first article, that every oppressed people had a right to rise against their oppressors."

Speaking of the refusal on the part of Great-Britain to accept of the mediation of Spain, on terms which would, at least, have tacitly acknowledged our independence in fact, though not in right, he says: "If I am asked for names to be given some years hence to the firmness the English are now demonstrating, the answer will be, I don't know. As to what they merit, I do know. I know that the annals of the world rarely shew *a nation chusing rather to renounce her existence than her glory.*"

With respect to the continuation of the confederacy against England he queries: "Is it possible that a strict union can long subsist between confederates of such opposite characters as the hot, disdainful, and inconsistent Frenchman; the slow, haughty, jealous, and cold Spaniard; and the American, who retains a lasting regard to his Mother Country, rejoicing in the misfortunes of his allies, as far as it is compatible with his independence? Can those people, whether acting in concert or separately, avoid mutual accusations, complaints, and quarrels? Besides, history informs us that few leagues have divided the spoils of the nation against which they were aimed. Athens was victorious over the Persians, Rome delivered from Hannibal, and, in modern times, Venice escaped the famous league of Cambray; and now, in our day, Prussia, by the genius

of only one man, made a head in Europe, and this should induce us to suspend our judgment upon the issue of the present war. In a word, if we consider the spirit of the French nation, which is so opposite to that against which they are contending, we shall see that the French ardor is, perhaps, as ready to inflame as to extinguish itself; that it hopes every thing at the beginning, and that it despairs of all things when checked by an obstacle; and that, as belonging to its character, it wants the enthusiasm of success to acquire new successes. That the English, on the contrary, less presumptuous at the onset, notwithstanding their natural pride, know how, at a proper time, to fight with courage, rise with danger, and harden themselves against the disgrace of adversity, like the stout oak to which Horace compares the Romans, which, smitten by the axe and hacked by the steel, grows under the strokes, and draws fresh vigor even from its wounds."

He then considers the part which other European powers take, and says: "It is odd that the nations have not yet crossed the projects meditated against Great-Britain. A general resentment for the injustice and arrogance of this proud island must be the cause of this inactivity; but hatred subsides when interest appears. "'Tis possible for Europe to judge against her own safety for the depression of the power of Great Britain in the old and new hemisphere, and that, after rejoicing in the humiliations and dangers of this proud and tyrannical power, they take up arms to defend her." He enquires what will be the true interest of France and Spain with respect to America, if victorious, and gives it as his opinion that it will be their best policy to have us divided, not between them, but between ourselves and England. But I am tired with giving you extracts; the above are sufficient for a sample of the sentiments of this eloquent and popular author. He is, perhaps, the most popular writer of the day in France, and his exile will most probably encrease his popularity here and indeed in all Europe. As you understand

French, I have preferred the sending you the Author's own words to any translation of mine,\* and have already made this letter too long to add any thing more than compliments to Mrs. Thomson, and sincere wishes for your mutual happiness. I am, with most sincere respect and attachment, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble Servant,

SILAS DEANE.

Charles Thomson, Esq.,

Secretary to the Congress.

*The Royal Gazette*, Nov. 7, 1781.

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TO MR. HOLKER.

Paris, June 6th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Hazlehurst of Philadelphia, now at Amsterdam, writes me that he has bills drawn by your son to the amount of forty thousand livres on Mr. Chaumont, which are under protest. He is in great distress on account of the disappointment, and has prayed to use my interest to prevent the return of the bills. As no one can be more interested to prevent this than yourself, I have taken the liberty to inform you of the affair, being most sincerely desirous of serving yourself and son, as well as Mr. Hazelhurst. Permit me to suggest to you that it might be well for you to pass a few days here as soon as convenient to you to do it, the sooner the better. I dined yesterday with our mutual friends Sabbatier and Desprey, who informed me of other bills of your son's, to a considerable amount, being under the same circumstances. You will excuse the freedom I have taken, sensible that it proceeds from motives of friendship for all concerned. I am, with compliments to your lady, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Holker.

*Thomas Mss.*

\* The English translation printed in *The Royal Gazette*, has been substituted for the French in Deane's letter.



TO JOSHUA JOHNSON.

Paris, June 6th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Williams informs me that you have a vessel bound for America, and would be glad to take freight. I propose sending some goods to America, and therefore pray you to inform me when your vessel will sail, and for what port; how she is armed, and what are the conditions on which you will receive goods. We have no news of any kind. I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Johnson, Nantes.

*Thomas Mss.*

FROM ROBERT MORRIS.

Philadelphia, June 7th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have been long your debtor for two letters, one dated the 4th, of August, and the other from Passy the 2d, September, last year. I cannot doubt your having reproached me for the long silence, because my own feelings tell me you must. It can only be accounted for in the old way: the multiplicity and variety of objects that I am doomed to be constantly occupied by do not permit any part of my time to be spared to things not absolutely necessary.

You will readily believe that I was rejoiced to hear of your safe arrival in France, because it will enable you to justify by incontestable facts and proofs that character which has been so exceedingly traduced, and which I long to see placed in that respectable and meritorious point of view which I believe it deserves; and the sooner you shew your conduct in regard to money matters to have been strictly consistent with that honor and integrity that I believe to have attended you throughout life, the better, as the infamous behaviour of Arnold has put a weapon into the hands of your enemies, which they make use of to this day, by giving you every now and then a slashing stroke in coupling his name and yours together in their publications, and

always affecting to speak of you in the light of a condemned man, as you will see if you get the papers from hence.

I expected to hear more from you respecting the sale of lands, agreeable to the promise in your letter of the 2d, of Sept., but no later letter than that has reached me. I conversed with Mr. Livingston on that subject. He seemed to [approve] the scheme; but as we could not conveniently bring any [thing] to bear, he told me he would write to you respecting the sale of some part of his own lands. For my own part, I have not done anything, as no agreeable opportunity has presented itself. Your political intelligence and observations were very acceptable to me, for I do not object to receiving but to writing such, which, as a merchant, I was ever very adverse to, on account of the time such correspondence requires, as well as on account of the inconvenience that frequently results from intercepted letters. What you say of Mr. Necker excites my admiration of his talents and abilities, and my applause for the use he makes of them. I must try to imitate his virtues, and, if you will allow me to compare great things with small, I must also endeavor to pursue his plans and systems in reforming abuses and reducing national expenses, so far as they can be or are adapted to the situation and circumstances of this country.

You will probably have heard before this letter comes to your hands that Congress have appointed me to the important office of Superintendent of Finance; and although my former experiences of the inevitable consequences of becoming publicly useful, my interests, my peace of mind, and domestic happiness, all forbid the acceptance of this or any office whatever; and although I had a thousand times determined never again to have anything to do with public business, particularly as an officer, yet the solicitude of my friends, the entreaties of acquaintances, and, above all, the absolute necessity of somebody undertaking to introduce vigor and system into the modes of raising, and economy into the ex-

penditure, of public revenues, determined me to hazard everything, especially as Congress could not agree with tolerable unanimity upon any other person.

I am just entering on my duties, but have not yet qualified or taken my commission, as I think it best to put my private affairs out of my own hands first. But Congress are pressing their business on me, and I shall soon be plunged over head and ears.

If I can but find my way through the labyrinth, all will be well ; and if I do not, it shall not be for want of assiduity or exertion in the application of what little abilities I possess. This you may depend, that I will never give countenance to any measures that tend to deceive and mislead individuals in matters of property, for I hold it as essentially necessary for governments to practice moral honesty, if they wish for success or support, as it is for an individual that wishes to maintain a fair character.

Our present campaign, like most others, has opened to our disadvantage ; but you must know I am not apt to despond, and I really expect that, like all the rest, it will end in our favor. The tyranny and insolence that never fails to attend our enemy when they have success always lays the foundation for their humiliation. Duer is at his farm in New York, Lady Kitty and their little boy with him ; all well and in good spirits when I last heard of them.

Your friends are all well, likewise. I expect you will write to me and tell me what you are doing, and when you will return, for I confess I long to see the day when you shall honorably remove those aspersions which have been cast, and those suspicions that have been raised by your rancorous enemies. You must consider this as a kind of farewell letter, for I don't expect much time for writing in future. I am, Dear Sir,

Your sincere and obedt. servant,

ROBERT MORRIS.

Silas Deane, Esq.

*Deane Papers, Conn. Hist. Society.*

TO ROBERT MORRIS.\*

Paris, June 10th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—The dangerous crisis to which our affairs are rapidly advancing, affects me greatly. I can speak of nothing else with attention when in company; it excludes every thing else from my thoughts when alone. We have been deceived, and that principally by ourselves; we have deceived others unintentionally, I charitably believe. The British nation has fallen into errors equally great. Would to God this great tragedy of errors could have a happy catastrophe! It is in vain to blame our public managers, but it is wise in us to examine our present situation, and to weigh the probability of future consequences. Experience has shewn us that France is either unable or unwilling to assist us effectually, so as to drive the British forces out of our country. Judging from appearances here, I might conclude that France is unwilling, as appearances warrant such a conclusion; but when the conduct of men or of a nation is capable of two constructions, I would willingly adopt the most favourable. I know the inability of the nation to assist us effectually, and they say they are not unwilling. I ought to believe them, though I know it is certainly inconsistent with their interest, and with the safety of their foreign possessions, to remove the war from our continent. But to which ever of these causes we impute the continuance of the war in our country, the consequences will be found equally pernicious to us. Great Britain is determined in no circumstances to admit the independency of America, and so long as both parties remain inflexible, we shall continue to weaken, exhaust, and ruin each other; and who will eventually be the gainers? It is, I think, time for us to enquire how our account will stand on a close. Let the contest close when or in what manner it may, will independent sovereignty, in the hands of a democ-

\* One of the intercepted letters, published with alterations in *The Royal Gazette*, at New York, Oct. 27, 1781. Reprinted by Deane in his Address to the United States of N. A., 1784, with prefatory note. See *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.

racy, be a government under which our persons and properties will be better secured than they were before this unhappy contest began. Will our commerce flourish more under independency than it did whilst we were connected with Great Britain? This, I know, is generally believed; it is even relied on as a principal source from which we shall re-imburse our present expences. The subject, however, merits an examination. If the restraints formerly laid on our trade were overbalanced by the protection and encouragement given to it; if, in a state of independence, that protection and encouragement must necessarily be withdrawn, and our commerce with Great Britain and its possessions become subject to all the duties and prohibitions laid on the commerce of other aliens and strangers; if our commerce with France and other foreign nations must be subject to the conditions and restraints which they shall see fit to impose (as must be the case) it deserves enquiry whether we, in our commerce, shall become gainers or not. I have examined the question as thoroughly as I am capable, and am convinced we must be losers. We complained of England for including America in the Navigation Act, and other acts of trade; but if the naval force of that nation rose, in consequence of those acts, into a power sufficient to protect the trade of the whole empire; if the trade of America was protected thereby, could it be unreasonable that the trade of America should submit to those acts and regulations which were the source of its protection and security? We complained that acts of parliament prohibited us from carrying certain articles of our produce to foreign markets, and thereby gave England a monopoly advantageous to her and injurious to us; but it must at the same time be acknowledged that British subjects were generally restrained from purchasing and importing the same articles from other countries; so that if England made a monopoly of certain articles of our produce, she gave us in return a monopoly of her market, and liberty of re-exporting our goods, if a better

market afforded elsewhere. In this, the advantage lay evidently with us. A great part of the articles thus monopolized by England were such as could have been, and were formerly, supplied by foreigners at as low or lower rates than we could afford them. But the system of Great Britain being, as you know, to promote the commerce of her own empire in every part of it, not only restraints and duties were laid on foreign importations, but bounties given to encourage the growth and importation of many of our productions, which otherwise would not have found their way to Europe. Another complaint was, that we were prohibited the taking from foreigners, articles which we wanted, though not the growth or fabric of England; but it is well known that those articles, concerning which so much has been said, formed but a very inconsiderable part of our commerce. Every one who has had an opportunity of comparing the manufactures of one nation in Europe with another, of observing the different modes and principles of transacting business, will at once give England and her merchants the preference. All the more solid, substantial, and useful articles are made better and afforded cheaper than any where else, certain linens from Russia and Silesia excepted. And even those, as well as the less important foreign articles, came to us, considering the drawbacks in England on exportation, nearly, if not quite, as cheap as we could have imported them directly. But it has been also objected that foreigners were not admitted to bring their produce and merchandize into our ports and trade with us. Of all the complaints made by us on the subject of commerce, this appears to me the most absurd and groundless. The exclusion of foreigners from being the carriers for England is the corner stone on which its commerce and maritime power arose, and the principal cause of the increase of our commerce and navigation; and if ever we should be independent and at peace, and should neglect to pass acts to exclude foreigners from being our carriers, we shall never be either a maritime or commercial nation.

The parliamentary regulations and restrictions on our commerce were a principal cause of the unhappy contest between the two countries, and we were impatient under them, because we were apprehensive they were part of a system to enslave us entirely; and thus thinking, it was natural that we should exaggerate their hardships, and, in all our deliberations on the subject, turn our attention to the restraint laid on trade, without considering the encouragement and protection given to it. I do not mean to call in question the views or designs of any one of that period. I believe that others, as well as myself, had at that time but partially examined the subject, and, in truth, we know that too many of our leading patriots had little or no knowledge of commerce, its interests and dependencies. I confess, that, on a more extensive view and impartial examination of the subject, I think it evident that the restrictions which were laid on our commerce previous to the present dispute, were over-balanced by the protection and various encouragements afforded to it by Great Britain. But supposing that at the close of the war America remain independent, what must be the future situation of our commerce? Will independency, at the restoration of peace, give commerce such a spring, procure for it such new sources and encouragements as are necessary not only to revive it from the ruined state in which it now is, but to raise it still higher than it has been at any former period? Or will independency prove prejudicial to the commerce of America? This is a serious question, and the importance of it must apologize for the length of my letter. I know that I am writing to the first commercial character in America, but I also know your candour and love of truth, and, therefore, I venture to communicate to you my thoughts on this subject, which, if just, you will approve; if erroneous, you will correct. America left at liberty will, I am persuaded, take at the least three-fourths of all the European articles she wants from Great Britain. The superiority of the British manufactures, their conformity to

our taste and habits, the generosity and strict punctuality of her merchants, and, above all, the credit which they can give, and which no other nation can or will give, must secure to that nation as great a share of our trade as I have mentioned. But how are we to pay for those purchases? Whilst we were part of the empire, Great Britain gave a preference to our iron, naval stores, pot-ash, flax seed, &c., &c., and encouraged the importation of them by bounties, and by laying heavy duties on the same article from foreign nations. This will no longer be the case; we have no reason to expect to be even amongst the most favoured foreign nations in the British ports. We have imagined that Great Britain could not support its commerce and manufactures without our productions, and without our markets, for a consumption of theirs. This has been asserted in harangues and publications many thousand times within seven years past. I confess that I once believed it, but observation and experience have convinced me that we have been greatly mistaken. Of all the articles furnished by us to Great Britain, I know but two, tobacco and rice, which cannot be obtained as good and as cheap from other countries. The consumption of rice in Great Britain is very inconsiderable, and that of tobacco does not exceed 20,000 hogsheads annually, on an average. Other countries, indeed, can produce both these articles at as low a price as America can; but the preference given to them from America by Great Britain has formerly prevented their being cultivated to any extent. It is well known that the island of Cuba, the coast of Brazil, and many other countries produce tobacco of a superior quality to ours; that the Ukraine is capable of supplying all Europe with that article. Its cultivation, it is true, is not yet carried to perfection there, but, as it is, Russia at this time exports large quantities of tobacco to France and to other nations. The same may be said of many other countries respecting rice. Indigo is produced in the southern parts of America, and in the islands, every way superior to ours. The



productions of Russia, Denmark, Sweden, &c., are the same with ours, and, in exchange for them, those kingdoms take the same kind of merchandize from England as we formerly took. At best, therefore, we shall meet with rivals in the British markets on our arrival with our produce, and rivals in the purchases we wish to make there. But we are supposed to be independent, and can, therefore, go where we please. But we cannot find purchasers where we please, and the nations among whom we find them may lay what impositions they please on our sales. The northern powers in Europe cannot become purchasers, for they have the same articles to sell. France wants but a very small part of our productions; it wants neither our iron, pot-ash, flax-seed, fish, oil, or, in short, scarcely any thing, except about 24,000 hogsheads of our tobacco annually, our timber and naval stores; and for the two latter articles, we shall find the same rivals in the ports of France as in England, and in regard to the first, the most important article of all, the cultivation of it advances so rapidly in Flanders and in the Ukraine, that those countries will soon rival us in the quality of their tobacco, and, from the cheapness of labour, be able at all times to undersell us in France and in all the northern ports in Europe. We have no promise of a preference in the market of France, nor the least ground to expect it. Spain and Portugal, it is true, may want our flour and our fish, if, contrary to all appearance, we should have any of the latter. But they will want little or nothing else, and our trade, be it whatever it may, to the southern ports of Europe, and into the Mediterranean, must at all times be exposed to the Corsairs of Barbary. Those piratical states, who pay little or no respect to the flags of the first maritime nations in Europe further than they are paid for it, will hardly pay any to the flag of a nation they have scarcely so much as heard of, and of which, if they come to know any thing, they will know that they can, in no case, have any thing to hope or fear from.

We have protested against the African trade ; but if we relax or rescind our resolutions on that subject, without a marine to protect our commerce there, and without either forts or factories on the coast, we can have no share of it. We cannot flatter ourselves that we shall be able to reduce either Nova Scotia or Newfoundland, Canada or the Floridas ; and if Great-Britain be obliged, at the close of the war, to submit to the loss of thirteen colonies, it is natural to suppose she will exert herself to make the most of those which are left her. We neither have nor wish for possessions in the West-Indies. We formerly had a great and encreasing trade there, but how much of it shall we retain as an independent nation ? If any part of the globe be dependent on us for our produce, it must be the West-Indies. Five years ago we rated our importance so high as to believe that, from a suspension of trade with us, all the manufacturing towns in England would rise, or at least clamour loudly, in our favour, through the want of employment ; that Ireland would be ruined, only for the want of our flax-seed ; and that the British West-Indies must perish by famine from the want of our productions. But the experience of six years ought certainly to correct such erroneous ideas of our own importance, or we must have been incorrigible even by experience itself. Not one manufacturing town in Great-Britain has complained for want of employ. Ireland has been supplied with flax-seed at as cheap, or cheaper, rate than formerly, and has found sufficient markets for her linen. The West-Indies may have suffered but little diminution. These facts ought to convince us that the world is not so dependent on us as we have imagined, and by pursuing our inquiries we shall find that we are as much, or more, dependent on our neighbours than they are on us. I am not writing to one who declaims against luxury without any conception of its effects, nor to one of those who talk a great deal about commerce and of its benefits, or of its disservices to a country, without having the least idea of its nature, or the extent of

its influence and power. I, therefore, may, without reasoning on the subject, venture to say, that the productions of the West-Indies are essentially necessary to us, and that we can do no better without their sugar, rum, coffee, cocoa, cotton, &c., &c., than they without our flour, beef, lumber, &c., &c. Formerly, as British subjects, we had the right of supplying the British islands with whatever they wanted, and taking in exchange whatever they had to dispose of. We paid no more duties than our other fellow-subjects paid, either upon importation or exportation. We had a right of carrying to the French, Dutch, and other foreign possessions in the West-Indies all our productions, tobacco excepted, and of receiving in exchange from them whatever they could afford, rum and a few other articles excepted. The articles we received from them were, indeed, subject to a certain duty on importation into America. But how was it then, and how is it now, with the French, Dutch, and other foreigners, as to our commerce with their West-India possessions? It is true we were admitted into their ports, but our flour was a prohibited article, and only admitted openly in times of scarcity. Many principal articles of our produce were in the same predicament. France, by prohibiting our flour into her islands, shews that she was in no fear of starving without supplies from us. But what articles of their produce were we permitted to purchase and export openly in exchange? Molasses, or the wretched liquor which they distilled from it, only; all others, such as coffee, cotton, sugar, indigo, &c., we brought away as by stealth, and by the purchased connivance of their officers. Has France bound herself by treaty to give us more freedom of trade with her islands than formerly? By no means. We are to be treated as the most favoured nation is treated; and the subjects of the most favoured nation were never better treated than the manner I have described. The favourite article of my countrymen, molasses, the only one of any importance which we were at liberty to

import from the French islands, was taken care of by Congress in their first proposals to France for a treaty. I saw the importance of it at that time, and flattered myself we had secured it without any real sacrifice on our part ; but Congress afterwards thought differently, and gave it up. We have not, therefore, at this day, any security, even for this single article. Every thing rests on the general and vague terms of *reciprocity*, and of *being treated in the same way and in the same manner as any, even the most favourite nation shall be treated*. But it may be said that the necessity in which the islands must be for our produce will at all times bring them to our terms, or, at least, to just and reasonable ones. Let us examine the subject attentively. The French islands can be under no necessity of taking from us flour or salted provisions of any kind ; on the contrary, it is the policy of France to prohibit them doing it, if so disposed ; for by supplying her islands with flour of her own growth and manufacture, and with all kinds of salted provisions purchased in Europe with her brandies, wines, &c., she encourages the agriculture and commerce of her subjects in Europe, which is a prime object of every wise nation. As to fresh provisions, her windward islands only, can ever be in want of them ; and, at most, the demand is inconsiderable, and the business of supplying never was, in the best of times, a profitable branch of commerce. Great-Britain, in possession of Canada, Nova-Scotia, and the Floridas, can, from those colonies, supply her islands with every thing they want at as low, or lower, rate than we can. Wheat, lumber, fish, horses, &c., have for many years since and before the war been cheaper in Canada than with us ; and West India goods of every kind have been dearer. Great-Britain, therefore, naturally must and will shut her ports against us as a foreign, independent nation ; her islands will want nothing from us which they cannot be supplied with from her own colonies on the continent ; and those islands produce nothing which is

not wanted either in Great-Britain or in those colonies. Good policy must, therefore, lead her totally to exclude us from all trade with them. Our commerce in this most important branch of it must, therefore, be confined to the supplying the French, Dutch, and other foreign islands and settlements with such articles as they will consent to take from us, and receive in return molasses (openly so long as they shall think proper to afford it to us free of duty) and such other productions as they may be pleased to connive at our smuggling. Thus in Europe we shall be either excluded from our ancient and certain markets, or, at least, rivalled in them, and we shall have no certainty of new ones, nor any security against heavy duties and impositions in such as we may be able to obtain. New channels have been opened for supplying Great-Britain with the commodities we formerly furnished to that nation, and for consuming the manufactures we formerly took from her. It was the interest and policy of Great-Britain to promote our commerce and fisheries whilst we were part of the empire. Accordingly, she encouraged our ship-building by the purchase of our ships, or by giving them freight; but, being independent, the reverse will become both her interest and policy towards us. Her ports will be entirely shut against us in the West-Indies for the reasons already given, and our commerce in that important branch confined, as I have shewn, to the furnishing the French, Dutch, and other foreign settlements with such articles as they shall consent to receive, and under such conditions as they shall see fit to impose, and in return they will give us molasses, if they please, free of duty. But their sugar, coffee, cotton, &c., will ever remain prohibited articles so long as those nations are interested to make a monopoly of these articles in Europe, both on account of commerce and revenue; and it is impossible they can be interested to do otherwise. When France was in possession of Canada, Louisbourg, &c., the government did not permit those colo-

nies to receive sugar, coffee, or any of the productions of those islands directly from them, but obliged those colonies to take them from France, charged with double freights, duties, &c. ; and can we expect that France will do for us what she ever refused to do for her own subjects? That she will grant us privileges which she never granted to any other nation? Can we expect that Great-Britain, resentful on account of her losses, and desirous of encouraging the colonies which may remain to her in America, and which will be able to supply her islands with every thing, can we expect that she will permit us to trade with those islands on any terms? It is repugnant to common sense to suppose it. Congress, you may remember, spent some months in debate about the fisheries. They acted the parts of the hunters who quarrelled about the bear-skin; for England in the meantime drove our allies, as well as us, entirely out of them. Nor can France regain any interest in the fisheries but by the sacrifice of some advantage which she has, or may hereafter gain. But how are we to come in for any share in them? It will be to no purpose to plead that our local situation gives us a natural right to participate, and that we enjoyed that right from our first settlement, &c. That we enjoyed that right, with others, as subjects and part of the British empire, is true, but we have separated from it, and appealed to the sword. The sword has decided against us on that subject; and shall we at the peace have any thing to give or restore to Great Britain equal to the purchase of what that nation is almost as jealous of as Spain is of her mines? Will France, after having regained a share in the fisheries for herself, go still farther to obtain an interest in them for us? Look into the treaty between us, and you will find France and we acted a little like the hunters I have referred to, in our division of Newfoundland and the fisheries; but it was made on condition of a conquest of them by either or both of us;

that failing, France is under no obligation to guarantee any part of them to us ; and what puts the matter out of all question is, that it is not for their interest that America have any share in the fisheries. Deprived of these, and of almost all the West-India trade, wholly excluded from that of Africa, as well as from the benefit of selling our iron, pot-ash, flax-seed, timber, naval stores, indigo, etc., advantageously in Great Britain and Ireland, with few or no markets opened for those commodities, what resources will be left for our commerce ? No nation in Europe, except Great Britain, will give a suitable price for our indigo. Ireland can be supplied with flax-seed, and lumber, from the North, at nearly as cheap a rate as we can afford those articles. Sweden and Russia can at all times undersell us in the articles of iron, timber, ships, naval stores of every kind, potash, &c. The bounties on tar, turpentine, &c., being taken off, we cannot send those articles to Europe without an insupportable loss, and we cannot expect that any nation (like England) will give us bounties on those articles. In taking a view of the West-India commerce, I have said nothing in particular of the Spanish, Portuguese, or Danish settlements in America. I think you will agree with me, that, as the two former have ever been, and most probably will remain, shut against all strangers, nothing can be expected from thence ; and that as to the latter, they are too inconsiderable to merit particular attention, even were they not nearly in the same predicament with those of France and Holland, which you know them in truth to be.

These external difficulties appear to me to be of themselves insurmountable, but they are not all we shall have to encounter, if we should, contrary to all probability, continue independent. Without a marine force, our commerce will be every where exposed to imposition and insult, and we shall not probably be able to support a marine. In truth, neither our friends nor our foes can wish to see us a maritime power.

But there will arise at the peace, and in a state of independency, other embarrassments and burdens on our commerce. Our national debt, considering our ability, will be immense, and we shall not easily agree in apportioning of it to the several states. This, and a multitude of other causes for dispute, are so certain, and so likely to be productive, that it will be miraculous if we can avoid a civil war with each other, as soon as we shall be freed from foreign enemies. Heavy taxes must at least be laid to pay even the interest of our public debts, in the exhausted state in which the peace will find us. We cannot think of lessening the principal until the Continent shall have had some time to recover itself. But the interest of our public debt, and the expences of governments in each state, will (though they must prove heavy) not be the whole of our burthens. The civil list of Congress, including the expences of their foreign ministers, consuls, &c., will exceed all our former expences, public and private, under our ancient government. Commerce, therefore, will necessarily become the subject of heavy taxes, because the landholders who are naturally jealous of commerce, and not the merchants, will predominate in making our laws and imposing our taxes. A large share of the taxes must, however, fall on the land holder, which will oblige him to raise the price of his productions, and this, with the taxes on trade, will encrease it to such a height, that we shall find no market in which we shall not be undersold by foreigners. You, who are perfectly acquainted with the disposition of those who form the Congress and the Assemblies of the different States, know that is very far from being favourable to commerce. Their views are so contracted, that they never have seen that agriculture and commerce mutually depend on and support each other. The resolutions of Congress, in almost every instance, demonstrate their ignorance of the principles and effects of commerce; the non-exportation agreement (for which I must blame myself as well as others) was a fatal



measure ; it laid the axe to the root of our commerce, and our agriculture fell with it. That resolution shews what extravagant ideas we then had of our importance ; we flattered ourselves that, by shutting our ports, we should distress Great Britain and Ireland, and starve the West Indies, so far as to effect our purposes. But the operation of that resolve well nigh starved our army and the poorer people, and brought distress to the doors of every order. Unhappily but too many of our leaders are still buoyed up with the same wild and groundless ideas ; and when I hear men, reputed as the wisest and most enlightened of American patriots, advance that commerce is rather injurious than beneficial, and that it would be better to have foreigners who want our produce to come and purchase it than for us to carry it to them ; that the whole attention of America, as an independent nation, should be turned to agriculture and the manufacturing of articles of the first necessity—when I hear such doctrines advanced, and by men whom America has been taught to look up to, and revere, and reviewing at the same time the other circumstances which I have touched on, I become doubtful whether our commerce would not suffer as greatly from internal checks and embarrassments as from external ones. But, my dear friend, we are very far from the peaceable establishment of independency ; so far, that I candidly tell you that I think there is not any probability of its ever taking place, at least in our day. The nations of Europe, France excepted, are all of them against it, and none more so than Spain. France becomes every day more indifferent to it ; but so long as we can be made their instruments for humbling Great Britain, Spain will temporize, and France will appear to be in earnest on the subject. We are certainly the cheapest instruments they can find, to employ full one half of the forces of Great Britain ; forces, which, if left at liberty to fall on their foreign possessions, would soon reduce them to the state they were in in 1762. But how dearly do we pay for the services we are performing.

The powers of Europe, hitherto neuter, appear at this time far from being indifferent to the fate of Great Britain. Should any of them take part with her, the war will assume a different appearance, and our fate will become from that moment determined. I think there is a probability of such an event taking place soon, but my wish and prayer is for peace, and the re-establishment of America in her original rights. The present moment is unquestionably the most important America has ever seen; we are now of more weight in the general scale than we can possibly expect to be hereafter. Should the powers of Europe once agree on the terms of peace, our assent will hardly be asked, and we should find it necessary to acquiesce in the terms imposed on us. The present opportunity ought, therefore, to be improved. England, it is true, has a formidable league at this time against her, but we find in ancient as well as modern times that nations less able to resist, have been successful against leagues still more formidable. I do not, indeed, recollect any one league that ever came off victorious over the single power leagued against. The cause is in the nature of men and nations; it must, therefore, still exist in a certain degree, and I know not why it should not even in its full force. You will call this a political letter, against which we have often protested. I intended it only as a commercial one, but I could not examine the future probable state of our commerce under independency, without entering on politics. I have tired you so effectually by this time, that I will take my leave with requesting that you will make my most respectful compliments to Mrs. Morris, and assuring you, that I am ever, with the most sincere esteem and attachment, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

S. DEANE.

Hon. Robert Morris, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ISAAC HAZLEHURST.

Paris, June 12th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of 21st ulto. I can get no intelligence of your other letter. Have written to Mr. Nesbitt to repeat his inquiries at the post office at L'Orient ; it is not in this. I wrote yesterday to Mr. Holker, at Rouen, on the subject of your bills, and I know of no other application that can be of service to you. I would advise you to write also to him, and I doubt not he will exert himself to save the credit of his son by taking them up ; it is said his son is about to return. We have no news.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Hazlehurst.

*Thomas Mss*

TO JESSE DEANE.

Paris, June 13th, 1781.

MY DEAR SON,—I wrote you yesterday, and this serves only to cover a letter which you are to put into the post office at Ghent. If you are near a convenient place for it, bathe every day ; but if you cannot swim, be careful how you go into deep water ; it is a healthy and beneficial exercise which every person ought to be master of, and you will be inexcusable if you neglect learning it now. Take care of your health. Present my compliments to Mr. Catres and Mr. De Bay, and be assured of the constant paternal affection of, my dear son,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jesse Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JEREMIAH WADSWORTH.\*

Paris, June 13th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—The appointment of an Ambassador to the Empress of Russia has led me to make some serious reflections on the idea which Congress entertain of their own importance in the commercial and political world; they appear to be persuaded that every nation in Europe, England excepted, are interested to have us independent; and though they have been told the contrary by every power they have applied to, except France, yet the flattering delusion continues, and a minister extraordinary has been sent to Russia. The fact is, that there is not one power in Europe, except France, interested in having us independent, and by much the greater part are interested against us. The Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia, not being commercial powers, can be very little affected either way. Holland and all the Northern powers are naturally interested against us; their productions and ours are the same in every article, indigo and rice only excepted. Russia raises tobacco for its own consumption, and begins to export large quantities to its neighbours. The two great sources of the Dutch wealth are their fisheries, and their freights for other nations; in both these America must soon interfere with them; the New Englanders began to rival them in those branches of business before the war. If we look Southward, Portugal owes its existence as an independent kingdom to England; were England once so reduced as to receive the law from France and Spain, Portugal would instantly become annexed to the latter. The wealth of Spain lies in its islands in the West-Indies, and in its provinces on the Continent. Can Spain wish to see a mighty independent empire of confederate republics established in

\* One of the intercepted letters; see *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.

the neighbourhood of all its treasures ? It is to the last degree absurd to suppose that Court can be so blind to the consequences which must soon result from such an event. Whilst we continue dependent on Great-Britain, and under its controul, Spain will have nothing to dread so long as it continues to be on good terms with the Court of London, and the European connections and alliances of Spain will serve to prevent that court from wantonly breaking with Spain ; but North America, freed from all European controul, will be at liberty to break with Spain at any time, without disturbing the peace of Europe, or interesting any of its powers in the quarrel. The family connection between the Courts of France and Spain, and the desire of revenge for her former losses, have led Spain into a war ; but it is evident that the Court of Spain will not on any considerations make the war a common cause with us. America out of the question, Great-Britain is greatly superior to France and Spain united ; this France and Spain are sensible of, and therefore give us good words and encourage us on, that England may be weakened by our expence. France has acted openly, it is true, but the assistance afforded us from time to time has been calculated not to drive the British forces from the Continent, but to keep us from accommodating, and to employ their enemy within us. Spain has given us a trifling aid in money, but in the most secret manner, more like a bribe than a subsidy. The other Southern powers are not in any respect interested in our dependence or independence, but are perfectly indifferent as to either ; nor, if they should interest themselves, would it be of the least consequence. But, you may say, France having valuable possessions in the West-Indies, ought, on the general principle which I have advanced, to fear the consequences of our independence. Not at all. The possessions of France, from their being islands, can have nothing to apprehend from the independent sovereignty of the United States. France will, at all times,

have a fleet sufficient to protect them, and it can never be our interest to have any other concern with them than in the way of commerce ; but our position with respect to Spain is different. Nothing but a river will separate us, and the contrariety of our dispositions, manners, and habits are such, that it is impossible, if left to ourselves, that we should live for any time in peace with each other. Congress, to induce Spain to declare and act openly, have offered to cede the two Floridas. It is really no great act of generosity to offer what is not ours ; but suppose Spain accepts and gets possession of them, we shall thereby become still nearer our neighbours, and quarrel so much the sooner. Spain is not, however, or appears not to be, contented with this offer ; insinuates that Louisiana ought to be thrown into the scale, on condition of her guaranteeing our independence. It is but too probable that Congress will not even refuse this, if they are persuaded that their independent sovereignty cannot be established on easier terms. But no man of sense and knowledge in these affairs can imagine that Spain is serious in this demand, or that that Court means any thing else by it than to gain time. Spain cannot be ignorant that, from the day in which we become peaceably established in Independent Sovereignty, she must look forward to the loss of all her southern provinces as an event certain, and not very distant ; and she must know, that though she obtain Louisiana, yet the Allegani, or Western Mountains will be as insufficient a barrier between us as the Mississippi. I must tell you that our independence is spoke of in a very different stile here from what it was three years since ; it is not viewed here in the light in which Congress speak of it when they say it is as fixed as fate (or, if they mean any thing), as certain as those eternal laws of nature which omnipotence itself cannot alter ; on the contrary, it is considered by every sensible man here, as not only doubtful, but the probability greatly against us. The consequences of American independence are

also estimated very different from what they were formerly in France. Experience has shewn that our attachment to the English manners, customs, and to their manufactures is such that, if independent and at liberty to trade where we please, England will have the preference. Almost every American who arrives in France is impatient to get over to England ; and the severe laws you are passing on that subject may prevent their ever returning to America, during the war, at least ; but it will not prevent their going over. The laws ordering confiscation, &c., demonstrate more fully than any direct language is capable of the predilection of Americans for England. France, though at war with England, permits her subjects to go to London openly, and when they please, they taking out passports ; and not a week passes but some of the citizens of Paris go over to London, and there are now more than four times the English goods consumed in this city than there were before the war. The better sort of people here, both at court and in the city, are now become mad, as I may say, after every thing that is English ; and even the ribbons worn by the ladies at court are, in a great part, from English looms.

I have been told that Monsieur Luzerne remonstrated to Congress against our trading with England or purchasing and importing its manufactures, and that those laws have passed in compliance with his remonstrances and requests. I am unwilling to believe it ; for, if true, we are become, and that voluntarily, greater slaves to France than its own subjects are. On whatever ground the laws have been passed, I venture to predict that not any one good effect will be produced by them, but the contrary. A little time will shew what success Mr. Dana meets with at Russia ; but if he meets with any at all, I am greatly mistaken. I know of no power in Europe, Portugal only excepted, that is naturally and necessarily more in the English interest than Russia. I hear that your spirits were greatly raised on hearing of the declaration of

England against Holland ; I expected it would be the case, though, every thing considered, there is not the least ground for encouragement from that event, but the contrary. It is now more than four months since England commenced hostilities, yet the Dutch have made no reprisals, nor are they prepared to make any at this time. Nearly one-half of the Republic are violently against a war with England on any considerations whatever. The views of England in declaring, were to exclude Holland from the armed neutrality, to dissolve at once a confederacy which at best could not have lasted any time, and to deprive France and Spain of their naval supplies furnished by the Dutch, and the French islands of provisions by the same channels. The purpose has been effected ; Russia offers to mediate, but refuses to take part with Holland ; Denmark has in effect long since deserted the confederation, and the armed neutrality, on which I never built any hopes, is come to nothing.

Before the arrival of Mr. Laurens, Jr., France gave Dr. Franklin six millions of livres for the current year ; it has since added four more, and, as it is said, has engaged to be our security for ten millions of livres in Holland, if to be borrowed at four per cent. You will be told, therefore, of twenty millions, and may possibly receive that sum ; but will that do more than prolong the war another year ? Without a fleet superior to that of England nothing can be done to any purpose as to finishing the war. I wish I could give you a more favourable account of affairs here, and such as you wish to receive and credit ; but I cannot do it consistent with truth ; and, though you are certainly misinformed as to the face of affairs in Europe by men who are either ignorant of them, and who are resolved, at all hazards, to write what they know you wish to believe, yet this will not justify my doing the same. In a word, my friend, nothing short of peace can save our country from ruin and slavery ; and whatever you may think in America, I am convinced that the terms



offered by Great-Britain afforded a good room to open a treaty on, and ought not to be rejected. This will not, perhaps, be a popular doctrine at present, but it must be sooner or later. For me, I have freely opened my mind to you, and, though you may differ in sentiment, you will not, I trust, condemn the motive for my having done it. I have long since had my accounts ready for settlement, and have been waiting here for six months past, on heavy expence, unable to get them audited. Mr. Johnson, nominated by Congress as auditor, refused from the first to act, and Congress have not named any other. Thus I am kept out of my money in a cruel and unprecedented manner ; but I will not add on the subject at this time.

My compliments to all friends, and be assured that I am, with much respect and friendship, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

Col. Jeremiah Wadsworth,  
Hartford, Conn.

*The Royal Gazette, Oct. 31, 1781.*

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TO WILLIAM DUER.\*

Paris, June 14th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—There has been lately published in the English and Dutch Gazettes a resolution of Congress, of March last, tending to forbid all intercourse between the inhabitants of America and Great Britain, or on any account or in any circumstances whatever ; and it is credibly reported that all British goods, however the property of them may have been acquired (capture excepted), are declared to be contraband and liable to be confiscated, and that an American in Europe or the West Indies who purchases goods of British growth or manufacture will, on his importation of them into America, be exposed to have his property

\* One of the intercepted letters ; see *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.

seized and to be fined, or, at least, censured. Several gentlemen, late from America, have informed me that such resolutions and laws were proposed before they left the Continent ; and the menace thrown out by Messrs. Adams, Dana, and Searle against any who should purchase British goods for the American market leaves me in no kind of doubt that such violent and inconsiderate measures have been actually adopted by Congress, and by some, if not by all, the Assemblies. I know not what good effects are expected in America from such resolutions ; in Europe they are esteemed impolitic and useless, at best, for any good purpose. But what is to me the most alarming is that those resolutions were taken in consequence of representations made by the French Minister at Philadelphia. And are we, in all the pride of independent sovereignty, become greater slaves even than the subjects of France ? Is the Congress, and are our Assemblies, become so dependent on this Court, as to be dictated to even by its Minister ? The merchants of France go freely to London, purchase goods, and though they are obliged at all times, whether in peace or war, to introduce them privately into the kingdom, or pay a heavy tax, yet when once introduced they sell them openly as English goods. They now advertise them as such ; and you can scarce go through a street in Paris without seeing many stores over the doors of which English goods, just imported, are advertised for sale. Congress have, within three years past, acted so often in direct contradiction to their own resolves and declarations that it is no way surprising that they have lost the confidence of the public. On this side the water, at least, they have entirely lost it. The King gave a large sum of money about the time of Mr. Laurens's arrival for the use of the army, but the Court had so little confidence in Congress that the money was made payable to General Washington's orders only ; nor could they be induced by the earnest solicitations of Doctor Franklin to give

Congress any controul over it. This shews either that they have no confidence in Congress, or that they mean to take General Washington and his army into their pay, and make them subservient to their purposes. Mr. Laurens obtained liberty to lay out a part of the money in cloathing and necessary articles for the army. The Ministers probably considered it more for the interest of France, and better for the army, to have such part of the money as must go in purchase of cloathing, &c., laid out in France than sent in specie to America; but what followed? Mr. Laurens sent his agent to Holland, and laid one million and a half of livres, nearly, in British manufactures. Thus, whilst Mr. Adams was declaiming in Holland against all use of its manufactures, and threatening every American that should purchase them with being advertised as the enemy of his country, the Agents of Congress were publicly (and therefore, I presume, with his knowledge) purchasing those proscribed manufactures for public use. Can the annals of the world exhibit more striking instances of inconsistency? This public preference given to the manufactures of England, by laying out the money granted by France in the purchase of them, has irritated the Minister, and given general disgust. Our affairs here will soon feel the consequences; nor do I believe that we shall have any credit at all, nor that our bills will be paid in two months from this time. Mr. Laurens was not to blame in this affair, so far as I know any thing of it; he acted prudently, and for the interest of his constituents; he did what you and every honest merchant would have done in his place. He had money to lay out for the public, and he sought the best market for the goods, most suitable, and such as were to be had on the best terms. Besides, there was a strong ship in Holland bound for America, in which they could be transported at little risque. But what can be said of Congress for passing resolves which they must know will not be obeyed, and which, as soon as published,

they themselves destroy by acting in direct contradiction to them? What I have hinted about our bills keep to yourself, or use it only to check any of our friends who may be disposed to venture too deep in them. You may be assured that no loan has been obtained in Spain or Holland ; that there is not the least probability of any ; that the resignation of Mr. Necker has been a sensible shock to public credit in France ; and that great embarrassments are apprehended in a few months on account of money ; that too many begin to consider every livre granted to America as so much lost ; and that Dr. Franklin is now under acceptances for nearly three millions of livres more than he has funds to answer for. These facts are sufficient for your direction. The Doctor may possibly obtain fresh grants. I doubt it. I know he has been refused, and, I am told, in rather harsh terms. Congress drew bills on Mr. President Laurens, as being in Holland, many months before he sailed from America ; they drew on Mr. Jay long before his arrival in Spain. These bills have been honoured, and you in America have been taught to believe that it was from money received in Spain and Holland. No such thing. Those bills have been uniformly sent to Doctor Franklin for payment ; even the salaries of Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams and their suites have been drawn for on Dr. Franklin, who has paid them out of the monies received here. The Agents of private States sent over here on one mad Quixotical scheme or other have been furnished with money for their expences out of the sums granted for the support of our army ; our Ambassadors and Agents have for some time past cost us at least twenty thousand pounds sterling per annum ; the relief of prisoners and other contingencies, more than as much more ; all this has been taken from the money afforded us by France for our army. Congress, though repeatedly advised by Dr. Franklin not to draw on him, have continued to draw without bounds, and generally without advice. By their conduct, one would suspect

that they imagined that the Treasury of France was at their disposal, and that they had a right to draw what money they pleased from it. The Ministers here see no end to this proceeding if permitted to run on ; and if the Agents and Ministers of Congress are permitted to contract debts, and draw on them for the payment, and if Congress are at liberty to draw unlimited on Dr. Franklin, and they obliged to answer ultimately their drafts, it is reasonable, therefore, to expect that France, under this actual circumstance, will hold its hand, and that you will soon find the bills of Congress protested for non-acceptance or non-payment. Nothing prevents it at this moment, but the fear of a violent revolution with us. Is it to be supposed that France will be content for any time to defray the expence of the various Quixotical embassies Congress are sending to different Courts? That she will continue to advance money to be laid out under her eyes, in the manufactures of her enemies, to the contempt of those of her own, and to her real impoverishment? You who believe this have faith indeed ; but it is a question with me if it is such as will remove mountains. I know and confess the difficult situation of Congress ; and I know also (what I am sure that they will not confess) that they have brought themselves into it by their cabals, their ignorance, and their mismanagement ; but their present embarrassments afford them no excuse for their involving themselves in still greater. If you ask me what they can do, I answer at once : Let them do what for a long time past they have left undone. Let them act an honest and consistent part ; let them acknowledge their inability ; let them, in a word, lay their case fairly as it is before their ally ; let them weigh fairly the probable chances for their succeeding to establish independent sovereignty, and if they find the probability against it, let them honestly confess it, and put an end to the calamities of our country by a peace on honourable terms. Perhaps to talk of peace on other conditions than Great Britain asking for it

on bended knees is Toryism with you ; if so, I cannot help it. I have for some time since had the fate, though I shall never have the fame, of Cassandra. I have predicted misfortunes and disappointments ; nobody has believed my predictions, yet they have hitherto been uniformly verified by events. "I could still prophecy, but the cold hand of despair is on me," and I will only add my wishes for your prosperity, and be assured of my sincere respect and attachment. I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,  
SILAS DEANE.

To Col. William Duer.

*The Royal Gazette, Oct. 24, 1781.*

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TO THOMAS MUMFORD.\*

Paris, June 15th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—My last was of the 23d February, which went by the ship Marquis La Fayette. My brother will shew you a long letter of the same date with this ; you have in that my sentiments of our present situation ; I am apprehensive that they will not coincide with what you in America wish to believe, but that is not my fault. If I were as fond of momentary popularity as some men are, I should write in a different style, and by exaggerated accounts of the force and energy of our friends, and of the exhausted and distressed state of Great Britain, endeavour to buoy up the hopes and expectations of my countrymen. Such letters would be sure to be read in all companies, and select paragraphs printed in the papers, prefaced with hints to inform the public from whom the intelligence came ; but I do not think that any consideration can justify an American deceiving and misleading his countrymen under their present ex-

\* One of the intercepted letters ; see *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.

tremely critical situation ; much less can a man be held innocent in deceiving his friend, or even in not laying before him the true state of affairs in which both the one and the other are so deeply interested.

I have in my letter to my brother given briefly my way of thinking and reasoning on the present posture of the American war, and what relates to or is dependent on it. I am confident that you know me too well to impute my sentiments to caprice, disgust, or interested motives. At the same time you will not, I am sure, approve of or adopt them ; nor, on the other hand, condemn without previously examining them with coolness and impartiality. Few men are capable of examining and reasoning justly on any complex subject while in the heat of battle, but after six years' contest, it is certainly time to breathe and look round us, to examine what the original object of the war was ; whether it is obtained in part or wholly ; what we have expended and sacrificed in the pursuit ; what our present situation is ; what rational prospects we have finally of succeeding, and whether the fruits of final success and victory will over-balance the losses and expence inevitable in the pursuit.

These are important questions ; they are such as I wished to see canvassed with that freedom and impartiality with which everything that effects the liberty and safety of a free people commands. The first objects of the war are fresh in every one's memory ; they stand recorded on the journals of the first and second Congress to be nothing less or more than a repeal of the acts of Parliament injurious to our rights and liberties ; those acts have been finally repealed ; the first objects are, therefore, out of the question ; but previous to such a repeal Congress were forced into a measure which they had before unanimously declared they even dreaded as one of the greatest evils, viz.: that of separating America from Great Britain. Until the Parliament proposed terms of reconciliation, and as a preliminary repealed the acts complained of, the original

objects of the war remained, and independence became a fresh object necessary to be pursued in order to gain the first.

Independence was, and is, therefore, so far from being a first object, that every idea of it was disclaimed in 1774 and 1775, even after the last appeal to the sword had been made. Independence, therefore, if I may so say, was an auxiliary object to be pursued for obtaining the primary; and after those were obtained, it became itself a principle only from our having bound ourselves by an alliance with France to support it, and from a persuasion that the peace, liberty, and safety of America could not any otherwise be so effectually preserved and secured.

The object of the war has, therefore, been changed, and is at this hour become a question not for certain constitutional rights, but for sovereignty only. If America cannot be either free, safe, or happy without this sovereignty (at present the sole object), it must justify the prosecution of the war; but if America may be free, safe, and happy without this, and if it is far from being certain that they will enjoy either peace, liberty, or safety after acquiring it at the expence and sacrifices which must be made previously, I think the present proposals or terms towards an accommodation ought not to be neglected. I confess that I once thought that the peace, liberty, and safety of America could no way be so effectually secured as under an independent democratical government, and at the same time I doubted whether the Parliament would consent to repeal the acts complained of, but had no doubt of the ability of France to put us in the peaceable possession of our independence; nor did I at the time doubt but that the temper and disposition of America was such in every part of it that such a government would be the easiest and best; but three years' experience has convinced me that I was mistaken in every one of those points on which I calculated.

I find that an independent democratical government



is not equal to the securing the peace, liberty, and safety of a continent like America. The discovery, indeed, is not a new one, for every nation in the world that has ever tried the experiment has found the same. I find that France is either unable or unwilling to put us into our wished state of independency, and that whilst we are struggling for it, we are become voluntarily more dependent on France than ever we were, or can be, constitutionally on England, and that the real temper and disposition of America is such, that a government of this kind cannot be supported for any length of time, at any rate, and that whilst it may exist, the peace and liberty of the citizens of America will be precarious and uncertain, and that under the name of independence we shall become more dependent than ever. Though satisfied of these facts, I am open to conviction; but having had more opportunities of seeing and observing what has past than most of my fellow citizens have had, I cannot but hint to my friends my sentiments on our present situation, and on the events, which to me appear inevitable, if we refuse to listen to offers of an accommodation, and resolve to prosecute the war at every risque.

Referring you to a letter to my brother, of this date, I will only add to this that I most earnestly entreat you to write me the true state of our affairs in America, and by several vessels, that I may be sure of receiving at least the certainty by some one of them, and that you will omit no opportunity of acquainting me with the welfare of our friends in general, of your family in particular. My most affectionate wishes are for your and sister Mumford's mutual and lasting happiness, and am, with the most sincere attachment and friendship, Dear Brother,

Your most obedt. and very humble Servt.,

S. DEANE.

To Thomas Mumford, Esq.,  
Merchant, Groton, Conn.

*The Royal Gazette, Nov. 14, 1781.*

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON.\*

Paris, June 15th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have written several letters to you since my being in France, but have not been favoured with any from you, which I attribute to the accidents of war, and the confusion you must have been in since I had the pleasure of seeing you.

I see by the public papers that the enemy have been with you at Berkeley, and that they are still in your neighbourhood. I doubt not that, as heretofore, your hopes are chiefly grounded on immediate help from France, or on some decisive diversion being made in your favour. It would be very inconsistent with the friendship I entertain for you and my friends in Virginia, to flatter you with any such prospects. The war has taken an unexpected turn, and we have calculated on false or groundless principles. England is neither weak nor exhausted, as has been represented; its present efforts demonstrate this; its navy is superior, and is rapidly increasing; the navy of France, and of Spain, has rose to its utmost height, and must rather decline than otherwise. You will have no assistance of any consequence from Europe until late in the season. As for money, you will have ten million of livres, possibly more, but beyond that is uncertain.

Holland wishes to accommodate, and probably will; the war throws that Republic into the most dangerous situation, and the French and English parties there are nearly equal. At best we can expect no diversion from that quarter until another year. Gibraltar is revictualled and relieved, and the Spanish fleet blocked up and insulted in Cadiz by Admiral Darby. A large reinforcement both of ships and troops are destined by England for some part of the continent of America. The armed neutrality appears nearly at an end,

\* One of the intercepted letters; see *post*, Oct. 20, 1781.

or, at least, nothing can be expected from it in our favour.

This is generally the situation of affairs on this side ; you best know how they are with you ; but if half so bad as have been represented, my fears and anxieties are not ill founded. The war is but indifferently conducted by our friends, if really we have more than one ; and on the other side an unexpected energy and vigor has been shewn. I say if we have really more than one friend ; with me it is no question, for I am fully convinced we have but one.

As to Spain and Holland, the independency of America is what they can by no means wish or desire ; they give daily proofs of this by their actions ; and, after all, what is it we are contending for, and for what do we put to risque every thing that is dear to the present and future generation ? The present offers of England exceed our first demands ; independence alone, therefore, must be the present object. But did we intend by renouncing a constitutional dependence on, and connection with, Great Britain, to render ourselves absolutely and unconditionally dependant on France ? Whatever we have intended, we have in effect done it ; and if we eventually succeed in the attempt for humbling Great Britain, reducing her navy, and obliging her to receive the law from France and Spain, we shall rivet those chains which we now voluntarily wear, in such a manner that neither we nor our posterity will ever be able to shake them off. I say if we succeed ; for when I view the resources, vigor, and energy of Great Britain, I am far from being so positive as to the event as I know you have been, and perhaps now are, in America. Though there are violent parties in England, yet neither of them are in favor of our independence. On the contrary, the opposition, who have been represented as our friends and patrons, are as much against us in this point as the Ministers themselves ; and though the former blame the latter for having caused the war, and would per-

haps agree to make larger concessions to us than what the Ministers will consent to, yet not one of them has ever ventured at proposing our independence.

The present Parliament is, perhaps, more determined than the former on this subject ; what, then, can be the consequence as to us, if after two or three years longer war, by the success of the arms of France and Spain with ours, and the losses and debts of Great Britain, that nation should be totally reduced, and brought to receive the law from France and Spain, in what situation shall we then find ourselves, and what security have we that the same Powers will not dictate the law to us ? And should they do it in the severest manner, to whom have we to look for aid or interposition ? Our once respected and powerful friend and parent will be ruined, and that by our means, and there will not remain a Power on earth to whom we can look for interposition, should the most humiliating and cruel terms be imposed on us. We have, by acknowledging on all occasions the immense benefits we owe to France, as it were mortgaged in advance our gratitude to, and dependence on, that Power. Is it safe, is it politic, thus to throw ourselves absolutely into the power of any state, though the most generous in the world ? What language France will hold on such an event's taking place, we know not ; but we know the style and conduct of Spain, even before the event of the war is known. They say, give us the Floridas. Congress are ready to submit. They add : retire from the Mississippi and Ohio, and give us Louisiana. This is more difficult. Our ambassador is refused an audience, and obliged to wait unnoticed among the crowd of humble suppliants. Is not this sample sufficient to shew us what we have, at least, to apprehend ? We have in part realized the fable of the stag and the horse. You know that in a war between them, the horse, too weak for the stag, applied to man for aid ; the man agreed on condition, on being permitted to bridle and mount the horse ; the horse submitted to

this proposal of his ally ; the stag was driven off the field, but the horse ever since has been held by the bits and felt the whip. With us, indeed, the fable is but partly realized ; the stag still keeps the field, though we have the bit in our mouths, and the rider on our backs. But if we have all the success we can reasonably wish or hope for, what must be our situation after two years war from this time ? France acts wisely in encouraging us to go on ; so does Spain, though the latter gives no open countenance to us ; for whilst full one-half of the British force is left on our hands, they can struggle with the rest, when, if the whole were at liberty to act against their foreign possessions, they would in two years find themselves in as bad a situation as they were at the close of the last war. Spain will not hazard any thing willingly, and they appear to have equipped a fleet only to make a parade with ; the moment a British fleet appears, they fly into port, and suffer themselves to be insulted. The visible object of both France and Spain is to weaken England at our expence, to exhaust its resources by forcing it to continue an expensive war on our continent ; and by the time that England shall become tired of such a war, or unable to support it longer, our country will have suffered what ages will not repair. Nothing is to be feared for a long time to come from Great Britain and America, whether separate or united. Every transaction, every measure of the two courts, points to this as their only object ; they carefully avoid every thing decisive in their military operations, and afford us just as much and no more aid as will keep us from giving up. To this point their whole attention is directed. The last year France sent us a fleet and army inferior to that of the enemy ; but to raise our spirits and animate us on through another year, assured us it was only the vanguard of a much greater force on its way. We relied on this promise, which was never meant to be fulfilled, and exerted ourselves to the utmost, and suffered two states to be ravaged and

subdued. During the campaign, whilst this vanguard of our friends lay still and looked on last winter, our army on the point of disbanding for want of pay and necessaries, some money was granted, and more promised, but under such circumstances that every one who knows any thing of affairs in Europe, knows there is as little probability of its being obtained, as there was of Mons. Rochambeau's promise to the assembly of Rhode Island being fulfilled. In short, my friend, we are acting over the fable of the dwarf and giant. You remember that the dwarf having a quarrel with the giant, made an alliance with a neighboring one, and took the field ; they soon fell in with their enemy, and a battle ensued, when, though the dwarf behaved with great bravery, and the action ended in favor of the allies, yet the poor dwarf lost an eye and an arm, whilst his ally received nothing more than a scratch or two on the surface of his body. Encouraged by his great and good friend, he made the best of it, bound up his wound, and went in to renew the combat, in the course of which he lost both his legs, and his remaining arm ; and whilst his great and good ally was exulting on the advantages they had gained, and singing *Te Deum* for victory, the poor dwarf lay on the ground bloody, mangled, and almost breathless. Excuse my having given you two fables in one letter ; it is not from a spirit of pedantry that I have done it, but I know of no words which can more forcibly represent our true situation and danger.

In the days of Roman simplicity and virtue a fable did what the intreaties, the eloquence, and even the decrees of their senate were unequal to ; it brought the people to reflect, prevented a civil war, and restored peace and harmony. Were I capable of inventing a fable, or using an argument which would have the same happy effect at this time, I should not envy the greatest Roman his laurels and his renown. I have, perhaps, tired you with this long letter, but I know you will excuse me from the motive, even if you

should differ from me in sentiment. We embarked together at first in this cause, and, I presume, from the same motives—the security of American liberty. We have suffered, as well as done much, and surely we cannot claim the title of freemen if we are not permitted to communicate freely our sentiments on the situation of our country; nor can it be treason to recommend peace and accommodation, when without it inevitable ruin is before us. I shall say nothing on commerce, as I have not been able to do any thing that way, and your present situation adds insuperable obstacles. I wrote your son several letters soon after my arrival, but have none from him. Make my compliments to Mrs. Harrison, to your son and family, and accept my sincere wishes for your peace and happiness, and that of our country.

I am, with great esteem, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,  
[S. DEANE.]

Hon. Benjamin Harrison, Esq.,  
Berkley, Virginia.

*The Royal Gazette, Nov. 21, 1781.*

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FROM JOHN JAY.

Aranjuez, June 16th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of the 8th April is particular on a subject on which, I confess, I wished to be particularly informed. I approve of your having conveyed to the Minister what you conceived to be the true state of our affairs. On such occasions policy, as well as candor, forbid deception. How far it was necessary or proper to mention the same things in conversation is less clear, and if that was the case I think it was not prudent.

[Cipher translated. As to Carmichael, he is ignorant of the contents of any letters that have passed between us. I once had my good opinion of him, and might have retained it. Almost from the time we

sailed from America he had not given me sufficient cause to repent his being with me. I cannot now go into details. I wish to be in a situation of forgetting them and him.] This must be *entre nous*.

I am told that Paine is in France, but, as far as I can learn, the objects of his voyage remain a secret. Mr. S[earle's] political reflections do not surprize me. I wish, however, they had been spared, as many may be led, from the extravagance of them, to consider such assertions rather as gasconades than well founded facts. It gives me pleasure to hear that France has lately granted very considerable aids to our country. They will be very seasonable in more than one point of view. They will strengthen our hands and confirm our confidence. Spain is going to do something great, if we may judge from appearances. I allude to the armament preparing to sail from Cadiz. Gibraltar is supposed to be the object, and the Duke de Crillon is said to be commander in chief.

Treaties with the United States is a most momentous and important subject, and therefore must receive the most minute and deliberate consideration. I am rejoiced to find that G[ouverneur] M[orris] is not alluded to in your former letter. He is still in Philadelphia, tho' not in Congress. It is a pity that his time should be spent in private life, when it might be employed with much advantage to the public. Mrs. Jay desires me to present her compliments to you, and I am, Dear Sir,

Sincerely your friend and Servt.,

JOHN JAY.

To S. Deane, Esq.

*Jay Mss.*

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TO JOSHUA JOHNSON.

Paris, June 17th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 10th, and note the contents. The time of your vessels sailing is too near to do any thing in shipping goods, were there no



other difficulty; but I really consider the risque of going to Philadelphia or Baltimore too great at this time. In short, the situation of the enemy in our country and on the coasts is such, that it appears to me that every adventure south of Rhode Island this summer will run very great risques of being taken. I shall take the liberty of writing to you in a day or two, and to trouble you with a letter or two for America by your vessels. I am, with compliments to Mrs. Johnson, very sincerely,

Yours, &c.,  
S. DEANE.

Mr. Johnson.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO SIMEON DEANE.

Paris, June 18th, 1781.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have received only two letters from you since my leaving America. I have had a succession of disappointments in every thing I counted on. Congress neglect in appointing any auditor, and I think with design to keep off as long as possible the settlement or payment of any thing. If they pursue the course they are in, they will very soon settle every thing; and after having reduced our country to the most distressed situation, give up what they have long since been found unequal to—the government of a great country. I have for ten months been soliciting a settlement with Messrs. Sabatier, and on account of the Union and the Deux Amis; at last am told that they will neither settle nor render any account until you shall have settled and sent over your accounts of the Soucy, and of all your other concerns for them in America. Those vessels were insured, but they say they have money due from you, and, therefore, will not account with me. You must, before this, have been informed of the turn which Mr. Chaumont's affairs have taken. Our friend at Philadelphia, the Consul, must be a great sufferer,

I imagine, as he has bills under protest to a great amount, and which, I fear, will be sent back. Pray finish that affair of the Soucy, and every other in Virginia, and at least let us be ready to begin anew, let us have ever so little left when the blessing of peace shall revisit our distressed country. Pray write, and by several vessels, to Messrs. Sabatier and Desprey, at least in what stage their affairs are. I hope you have settled them. I have done nothing, nor can I, unless on credit, which my past misfortunes make me afraid of attempting. My son is now at Ghent; he left me about ten days since, and I propose following in a week and fixing him some where in the Low Countries. Holland has not as yet made any reprisals on England. There is no prospect of any thing decisive in these seas this summer. Before this arrives you will know, better than I can tell you, what dependence is to be laid on assistance from here. The Emperor of Germany has been for some time in the Austrian Netherlands; he is evidently meditating something great, either by peace or war. If by the latter, he will take the part of England; and if by the former, he will doubtless force Holland to a peace with England, and to open the trade of his Netherland dominions. The Court here are under great apprehension on his account, and justly. A little time will let us into many things impenetrable at present. I can only say I have not the least hope of seeing the war terminated soon, and none of ever having our independency established. The shocking use we have made of it whilst we have nominally enjoyed, forbid me even to wish for it under the circumstances that I see must attend it. I pray you present my compliments to friends in Virginia. Write me often, and be assured of my esteem and fraternal attachment.

I am ever yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Simeon Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN NESBITT.

Paris, June 19th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I take the liberty to enclose to your care two letters, which pray you to send on by Capt. Darby, or the first vessel going for America. I pray the Captain to sink or destroy them in case of capture. Excuse my giving you this trouble, and be assured I am,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Nesbitt.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOSHUA JOHNSON.

Paris, June 19th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—This serves to inclose two letters which I pray you to send by your brigantine, with orders to sink or destroy them in case of capture. I am, with much esteem,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Johnson,  
Nantes.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JESSE DEANE.

Paris, June 25th, 1781.

MY DEAR SON,—Your last letter was dated the 12th, of this month. The post comes every day from Ghent, and you are at leisure. Think, then, how very uneasy I must be at not having received a line from you in almost two weeks. I flatter myself that you are not sick; if you were, Mr. De Bay or Mr. Catres would certainly inform me. I am unwilling to think that indolence and inattention have been the cause of

your silence. To what am I to attribute your not writing to me? I am very impatient to learn what it may be, and no one but you can satisfy me. I must, therefore, as a parent and a friend, insist on your writing to me immediately. I have been delayed beyond what I expected, but hope this week will set me at liberty, and that in the course of the next I shall see you; in the mean time be attentive to your reading and writing, and every day translate French into English, and English back into French, which is the best method I know of to render you master of both, and let me see when I arrive a few specimens of your performance.

I am, my dear Son, yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jesse Deane.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN JAY.

Paris, June 25th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—My last letter to you was the 8th, of April past in reply to one of yours of the 26th, of March. As my letter went by your express, I presume it must go sure; but receiving nothing from you since, I know not to what cause I am to impute your silence; whether to that letters having failed which, as I wrote without cypher, I have some right to be uneasy about on that supposition, or whether to the contents of it having been unsatisfactory to you. The latter, if the real cause, could give me the most uneasiness, as I count on your friendship from the most sincere and disinterested motives. I must, therefore, pray you to relieve me from my anxiety, tho' it be but by one line, just to inform me of the receipt of the letter, if it actually came to hand; and if the latter cause has occasioned your silence for almost three months, I shall know it without putting you to the trouble of a more full explanation; for on attentively reviewing my

letter of the 8th, April, I find nothing in it but what I approve of, both as truth and as good policy in my former conduct referred to in it. If you think differently, I am open to conviction, and am not too proud nor too obstinate to confess my errors when convinced. I have, indeed, wrote two letters to you since the 8th, of April, but have not sent either of them on, waiting to hear from you, which I hope you will let me do by the first post after the receipt of this, or by your first letter to Doctor Franklin. Should we unfortunately differ as politicians, I see no reason why that should interrupt our correspondence as friends. I pray you to present my compliments to Mrs. Jay, and to be assured that I am, with great Esteem and Friendship, Dear Sir,

Your most Obedt. & very humble Servant,

S. DEANE.

His Excellency John Jay, Esq.

*Jay Mss.*

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TO JOHN JAY.

Paris, July 2d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of the 16th, of June came to hand yesterday. By the last post I sent on a letter, inquiring after the cause, rather than complaining, of your silence. To be free with you, I have been apprehensive, ever since my arrival in Europe, that [Cipher translated. Carmichael might do me ill offices with you, but I find you know his disposition; and though I feel most sensibly for you, I cannot but be happy that you have found him out, as I may say, and most sincerely do I wish that neither of us may ever find such another.

He has been extremely attentive to Dr. Franklin. Not a post fails of bringing letters from him. Franklin is old and loves to be flattered; and though he first discovered Carmichael's treachery towards us, toward

me in particular, yet he has regained apparently his good opinion. I say apparently, for in certain matters the Doctor is no more of a Philosopher than the rest of the world. He has a grandson on whom he dotes, and whom he wishes to fix as Secretary in France, and therefore makes interest with everyone in Europe whom he supposes to have interest in Congress.

Though Carmichael is so punctual in writing to the Doctor, Beaumarchais, who lent him money when in Paris, cannot get a letter from him. As to Payne, he left America because he quarreled with everybody there. He pretended, indeed, that he came to France to get materials and to have leisure to write his history of the Revolution; and after being in Paris seven or eight days, unnoticed by any one, he returned with Mr. Laurens, for much better reasons than he had for his coming, viz., to avoid starving, and to regain the only theatre in the world on which he is capable of doing mischief.

Mr. Searle is about to sail from Holland, unsuccessful and disgusted. The aids granted by France were indeed considerable; but if you do not know it already, you must soon know that those aids are already exhausted, and in such a way as has given this Court disgust.

We have heard of the preparations in Spain for something great, most probably a second Armada, but we must hope the best. For my part, I freely confide to you that I despair of seeing the war terminated, either in our favor or for our honor.

Spain is as much our real enemy as England, and France will take the first good occasion to desert us and save appearances. Holland has refused to receive Adams' credentials, nor can we raise money there, either on public or private account.] But I have neither time nor inclination to pursue the subject. I set out tomorrow for Brussels, to make the tour of the Netherlands and Holland, but write and send on your letters under cover to M. Grand, Banker, Rue

Montmartre. They will find me, wherever I may be. I can never forget you, nor omit any good opportunity for writing to you. My best wishes are for your and Mrs. Jay's mutual Happiness. I am, Dear Sir,  
Your friend and humble Sert.

S. DEANE.

Hon. John Jay, Esq.

*Jay Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, July 5th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have been unhappy in not being able to pass more time with you in Paris. I hope, however, on your and my return we shall be differently circumstanced. I set off this day, and shall, at farthest, make a three weeks' tour of it; in the mean time I pray you to write to me under cover to Dr. Franklin, to be sent to Mr. Sebor at my lodgings, who will instantly forward the same to me, and give me your opinion of the vessel Capt. Falinge is gone down to examine; also whether insurance is like to rise or not from its present rate. If the vessel will answer, shall be able to dispatch Mr. Sebor in her in September, which is as early as I wish for. I cannot write in French, and the Captain does not understand English, or I would write to him. Pray tell him I have the utmost confidence in his ability, which I really have. I hope, on your return to Paris, you will find Mrs. Williams's health reëstablished. I regret my not having had an opportunity of paying her my respects in person, for no person can more sincerely wish for your mutual happiness than, Dear Sir,

Your most Obedt. & Very Hble. Servt.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. J. Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

## ARTHUR LEE TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Phil., August 12th, 1781.

CHANCELLOR LIVINGSTON, after much manœuvring, was elected on Friday last. Upon the first vote Mass., Conn., N. J., Del., and Va., were for me, and three for the Chancellor; on the second, Va. prevailed upon to throw away its vote, and the Chancellor had N. H., R. I., N. Y., N. J., S. C., and Geo.; on the third, Mr. Smith for this state [Penn.], with his senses hardly recovered from a fall which took them away entirely, was brought in, and, in conjunction with Mr. Clymer, carried the election.

By this success your worthy friend, Mr. Duane, obtains three points; he gratifies his malice against me, strengthens his interest with the French, and prepares a vacancy for himself in the chancellorship of New York. In my opinion, he has finessed upon the present Chancellor, who will quit a certainty for an uncertainty. This election is, I think, a very serious evil to the Eastern States, and indeed to all; for I can assure you that some things passed during the negotiation of the treaty which convinced me that there are deep designs against the fisheries. Dr. Franklin, we all know, is devoted to these designs. Mr. Jay and Chancellor Livingston are both enemies to the Eastern States, and therefore it is reasonable to apprehend that they will join with France in some article relative to the fishery, which, though injurious, will be ratified by the prevalence of a certain influence in Congress. I do not suppose Mr. J. Adams will continue in the commission under its present form; or, if he should, he will be out-voted. Those New England delegates who voted for the Chancellor have, if I am not much mistaken, given a mortal blow to the most essential interests of their country.

As to myself, I think the event of the election is



fortunate ; for if I had been elected it would have put me to the disagreeable alternative of disappointing the wishes of my friends, or entering into an administration where the financier [R. Morris] and probably the other ministers would have been in a cabal against me. The minister of France here [Luzerne], and in Europe the Minister for Foreign Affairs at the Court of Versailles [Vergennes], with our minister there [Franklin], and Mr. Jay and Mr. Carmichael at Madrid, would have combined in endeavoring to embarrass and mislead me. These are all my avowed enemies ; they are capable of everything to accomplish their purposes ; and in such a situation I could not expect to do my country any service, nor even to escape disgrace and censure. It appears to me, therefore, that I have had a fortunate escape ; and when I consider that the whole influence of the French Court, so powerful at this juncture, with that of Mr. Morris and Mr. Duane (who, having obtained absolution from the assembly of his state, is returned with renewed purity and power), have been incessantly excited against me, there is no humiliation in the want of success. I calculate the French influence to have carried four states—N. H., R. I., S. C., and Geo., decidedly. The same influence will be exerted to put Generals Schuyler and McDougal into the War and Marine Departments ; and if this should succeed, we shall have a complete New York administration constituted by the French. Gouverneur Morris is clearly appointed Deputy Financier.

It behooves the friends in America to look about them and bestir themselves. The plot is deep, the times are favorable to its success, and we may be fettered before we are aware. Shorn of our strength by a hand we do not suspect, it may be in vain hereafter to cry out, " the Philistines are upon us."

*Lee Mss., Harvard University.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, August 24th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Though I have been returned but a few days, and in but indifferent health, I should have wrote you ; but until yesterday I was told you might be expected here every day. I now find by Capt. Robinson that we shall not have the pleasure of seeing you soon. I was at Ostend in the course of my tour, and made some observations which I think may be useful in an adventure to America. A swift-sailing cutter may be purchased there, at least as cheap as any where ; the goods wanted in North America, especially in the northern ports, where only any thing can be sent with any degree of safety, may be had there on better terms than any where else, and more suitable to the market. The vessel may be covered by imperial papers and flag, out of danger in the European seas, and by going north, about directly for Boston or Portsmouth, little danger will be run, even next to none, making her voyage in November. Capt. Robinson is desirous of undertaking such a voyage. The vessel, on her arrival, will sell to a good profit, if it is thought best to sell her, rather than to make a cruiser of her. If you approve of these hints, and are inclined to be concerned, I will exert myself to take a quarter or third. Your thoughts on the subject will oblige me, as I intend a second journey to Ghent and Antwerp some time this fall, where I have an acquaintance with many of the best houses. I have not as yet seen Mrs. Williams, for which I should be unpardonable in my own eyes, had not my absence and inevitable accident prevented. I most sincerely congratulate you on her recovery, and the prospect of your being soon blessed with her company. I must see her before she sets out, and apologize in person. News we have none. Our affairs in America wore a gloomy aspect when the last accounts came away. The indefatigable General Greene had been repulsed

at Ninety-six, which he attempted to storm ; and Lord Rawdon, being reinforced by between two and three thousand fresh forces, General Greene was retreating towards Virginia by the interior parts of the country. I fear he will find it even difficult to affect it.

Young Mr. Mumford's uncle has written to me that he has taken his nephew immediately under his protection, and prays me to place him at Nantes. You know the character and acquirements of the young man. His uncle is every way the first mercantile character in Connecticut, and has been greatly successful this war. I wish you to have his correspondence, as you must be mutually satisfied with each other, and I know no greater obligation that you can lay on him than assisting his nephew to a place at Nantz ; if in your own house, the better. The young man has not lost his time at Dr. Franklin's, but he can gain nothing there in future, and time, at his period of life, is peculiarly precious and important. Excuse the interest I take in this affair, as it is to serve an absent and an old friend ; and if you can assist me, I am confident you will readily do it. I am, with much respect, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c., S. DEANE.

P. S.—The expence of placing him in a good house will be no objection.

Mr. J. Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ISAAC HAZLEHURST.

Paris, Sept. 5th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—We are told that Capt. Gillon has sailed, but that he left his convoy with the goods bought at Amsterdam behind. Pray write me how that affair happened, and whither he left his passengers, as well as the goods. I informed you generally of the course Shaffer was in, when I saw you, but I did not then

apprehend that the consequences would prove so serious as they actually have. In a word, he was arrested the day before yesterday as he was coming out of the Palais Royal Garden; had his hands bound, and was led off, first to his lodgings, and thence to prison, like a common felon; everything, except his cloathes on his back, seized on, his purse taken out of his pocket, and his buckles taken from his shoes and knees; and this in open day and in the street. I leave you to imagine how the poor young man must have been shocked at such unexpected treatment. He obtained yesterday the liberty of seeing his friends in the prison, and from what I can learn, he is charged with having made a double, and consequently a fraudulent, sale of the vessel I told you of. He denies the charges, but I fear that from his ignorance in business, which is extreme, and from his presumption and rashness, which have always rendered him deaf to the advice of others, and being concerned with a sett of knowing ones, without the knowledge either of their language or their real character, that he has involved himself in a very disagreeable, and perhaps disreputable, transaction; and I wish he may be able to get clear of it, even by the sacrifice of the little which he has left of what he brought out with him. I have not seen him, nor shall I until I am satisfied whither he has really acted the part his enemies charge him with, or not. In the mean time I shall be ready to do whatever is in my power to get him out of this scrape and out of this country, where he, as well as some others of us, have remained too long, either for our profit or any thing else of any advantage to ourselves or country. We have no news more than what you will see in the public papers. Pray tell me if your bills, drawn by Mr. Holker, are returned or not?

I am, with sincere esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Hazlehurst.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, Sept. 10th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 7th of June last, and though I wished to hear from you often, yet I never attributed your silence to any other than the true causes, which you have given me in your farewell letter, as you stile it, on account of your being about to reimbarck on the sea of politics. It is, my friend, a tempestuous ocean, and, I fear, not well explored. I am convinced that the motives which have induced you to engage are the most honorable and disinterested; but if you receive the letter I wrote you the 10th of June last, you will fully conceive what my apprehensions must be for the issue. Any sentiments unreservedly given in that letter anticipates any thing on the subject in this; but in a word, if the men who now apply to you in the hour of their discredit and distress had in 1778 appointed you to the same important office which they now force on you, our national faith, credit, and honor would have been preserved, and America would probably have been, before this, blessed with an honorable and lasting peace. I sincerely esteem your abilities equal to those of Mr. Necker's, but your situation and undertaking is widely different. Mr. Necker attempted, by lopping off the rotten and useless branches of an old tree, in its nature strong and vigorous almost beyond example, to give it fresh force and consistency. You have to reanimate a young one, which, by bad managers, has, even before it was well rooted, been lopped, peeled, and undermined. The office you have undertaken is at any time, and even in old establish'd nations, accustomed for ages to all the variety of taxation and schemes of finance, an arduous one; but, in the present state of America, it appears to me a labor truly herculean. If any man of my acquaintance is equal to it, you are, and as you are accustomed to do business in a clear and regular manner, I presume that one of

your first steps will be to ascertain what the debt of the public is at the time of your entering on their business, which gives me ground to hope that my long neglected account will now be adjusted and the ballance paid me. When I returned from America to France, it was on the presumption that such measures had been taken by Congress that my accounts would be audited as soon as ready. You must remember that as Congress insisted on their being transmitted to them with their vouchers before final settlement, I petitioned to have orders given that the ballance, whatever it undoubtedly appeared to be in my favor, should be paid me on my giving security to be accountable for any error that might be made. This was refused me, and on my arrival in France Mr. Johnson would not act as auditor. He told me he had long before informed Congress of his reasons for declining the service, and that he doubted not but they would either satisfy him on the subject or appoint some other immediately; but, to my great disappointment, and to the almost total ruin of my affairs, I have been obliged to wait here—it is now ten months—with my accounts ready to be audited and settled, without being able to get anything done, or to touch one livre of the large ballance due to me. I am informed that the accounts of Mr. Lee, though neither audited in Europe nor offered for it by him, have, notwithstanding, been passed by the board of accounts at Philadelphia. This encourages me to send the particulars of mine, and my general account current with Congress. As I cannot be present myself, nor send the vouchers, having no duplicates of them, it is possible that Congress may object to the ordering me the whole of the ballance without first having the vouchers examined and compared with the charges; but as the smallest examination will convince them that a large ballance is unquestionably due to me, I trust they will no longer put off the appointment of an auditor to examine and close my accounts, and that in the mean time they will order me an immediate

remittance, and impower their auditor to pay me with interest from the time of the monies having been due. I have stated the Commission account separate. You must remember that the contracts with me by the Secret Committee, and the Commissioner of Commerce promised me five per cent. on the purchases made by me in Europe on account of Congress, which I have accordingly charged. The purchases made after the arrival of my colleagues, though I was the acting person in the greater part of them, and took on me a business for which, being entirely independant of my political commission, I was justly entitled to that commission, which any other person would have been allowed, yet as I did not intend to charge it at the time, I have not done it now, though the expences I have been at in returning, and my time and money spent in attending here for a settlement, are sufficient to entitle me to such a demand. In my accounts generally of expenditures and disbursements you will see that all the money ever paid me or charged me, either by Mr. Grand or Mr. Solier, the bankers for Congress, amount to £150,389. 17, 11, of which sum £60,932, 0, 5 is made up of wrong charges, which I have explained in the account, and to the greater part of which, that of Solier's, you are knowing; this leaves the sum of 89,457, 7, 6, for me to account for. Out of this I paid to relief of prisoners at different periods 19,223, 7, 10, for the greatest part of which I have their vouchers. This sum will not appear extravagant, nor convict me of wasting the public money in unnecessary gratuities, when you find that, within two years after my leaving France, more than twice that sum was paid for that purpose. I have Mr. Carmichael's receipts and accounts for the money paid him, except for about 1,200 livres, for the sum of 47,899, 12, 6, paid officers going out to America, and Americans in service of Congress. I have their receipts for the whole; it cannot be expected that I can have vouchers for every article. I have, however, more than I thought I had before I

examined my papers; indeed, I do not think that there is ten thousand livres in the whole for which I have not vouchers. I have charged my time up to January last, not doubting but that when Congress see, as they must, from the very first view of the account, that, independant of my time and expences, I have paid out for them near as much money as I have ever received from them, they will think that the sum charged by me for my time in returning and settling their accounts ought to be allowed. With respect to the commission account, you will recollect that on my engaging to come to Europe in January, 1776, I received orders to purchase goods to the amount of £40,000 sterling, and was promised that the money should be sent out with me, or remitted so early that I should not be under the necessity of asking any credit for them, and that at the same time I was ordered to purchase brass cannon, cloathing, arms, tents, &c., compleat, for an army of 25,000 men; and the commission of 5 per cent. then and since given to the agents of Congress was promised me. Though pecuniary considerations had very little weight in determining me to undertake the voyage, yet my prospects were favorable in that way, as the certainty, as I then supposed, of having £40,000 sterling to dispose of in Europe, which must obtain a ready credit for the other articles to a much greater amount, would, by the commission itself, advance my fortune and, by the extent of the operation, obtain for me no small degree of consideration in the mercantile world. I need not repeat the history of what you know perfectly well. In short, though disappointed of the funds promised, and thrown into the most perplexed and embarrassing circumstances, yet I succeeded in obtaining on credit more even than I was directed to purchase, intent solely on fulfilling my commissions in the most advantageous manner for my country. I neglected my private interest so far that, though it was for a long time in my power to have paid myself my just due out



of the public monies then in my disposal, yet I never turned a thought that way, but relied entirely on the justice of Congress to fulfil their engagements with me. Some others in public employ acted a different part, and at all times held money in advance in their hands. At this time they find themselves at ease in their circumstances, and uncensured by Congress or the public voice; had I done the same, I might possibly have escaped the obloquy thrown on me—at least I should have escaped the distress in which I have been involved for two years past. But I will not add on the subject, least I say something that may tend to irritate others or myself, and be led to make recriminations foreign to the affairs in hand, which is simply an account, in the settling of which facts and figures alone are to be attended to. It matters not how obnoxious I have been rendered to many, even of my well meaning countrymen, nor by what means this has been effected; were I even their enemy, which it is not possible I can ever be, still honor as well as justice would require that what is due to me should be paid to me. I have for sometime since despaired of seeing justice done to my character until the phrenzy and madness of the present time is over; and I see by the public papers sent over from Boston and Philadelphia that, unhappily for our country as well as individuals, the wished for crisis is still at a distance, whilst the most respectable characters in Congress, or in the immediate service of their country, are daily traduced and abused in your papers, and the calumnies published with you transmitted here to be spread in Europe; and this by men who, from their station, ought to act a very different part. What can I expect—I, who have long since been inured to their calumnies, and have been refused either protection or justice by those from whom I had the greatest right to expect and demand both? I must patiently wait for better times, with this melancholy consolation: that it is hardly possible they can become worse. I

think it is not improper to make one observation on the subject of my accounts before I close. You will see that the whole of my charges for my time, including the last six months, and the expences of it, amount to 519, 57. 13, and that Mr. Izard, who received his commission at Paris, where he had previously settled himself and family for the sole purpose of educating his children, and who never took one step or expended one livre extra on account of his commission, received 6,000 livres of the public monies—more than two-thirds of the whole sum which I received of the bankers, and for which I am accountable; and, further, I can but remind you to look at the prisoners' accounts in the Congress Commissioners' book, and you will find very little charged before I left Paris—about 2,000 livres only; and from my leaving Paris, to the January following, more than 3,000 livres are charged on that account only. But I will not add to a letter already sufficiently particular, to shew my right to demand a settlement and payment of my account, and to have that justice done which has been so long and so cruelly refused me. I have addressed myself to you on the supposition that it must lie within your department to give orders on such subjects. If I am mistaken, you will please to lay this letter and the accounts transmitted before Congress, or that board which may be charged by them with the management of their concerns of this nature. My best compliments wait on Mrs. Morris, and am, with the most sincere esteem and respect, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Hon. Robert Morris, Esqr.

P. S.—As I stated the general accounts of Congress many months since, not only up to the time of my recall, but to the time of Dr. Franklin receiving his commission of sole Minister, and sent him duplicates of the books, I presume you have received them before this.

*Thomas Mss.*

## FROM CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

Paris, ce 11 Sep., 1781.

MONSIEUR,—Le règlement général de tous nos comptes m'a donné une nouvelle occasion d'approfondir avec vous tout ce qui tient à la première et difficile mission que vous recutes du congrès général en 1776, de venir chercher en Europe des secours à vos compatriotes et d'acheter toutes les marchandises et munitions que vous pouriez leur procurer, sans aucune autre titre, fonds ou crédit que votre seule mission du congrès.

Je me suis aussi rapelé avec quel zèle, quel soin, quelle constance et quels travaux vous avés commencé, suivi et terminé l'opération délicate de tous les envois, que J'ai faits à l'amerique. Si vos ennemis, depuis ce temps, sont parvenus à diminuer le mérite de votre conduite politique et commerciale aux yeux de vos commettans; c'est un malheur pour votre pays et pour vous, dont je ne puis que gémir, moi, premier et continual témoin de vos grands efforts pour servir votre Patrie. Ce sont ces efforts, Monsieur, qui m'ont donné pour vous la haute considération, l'estime et l'amitié que je vous ai vouées avec d'autant plus de plaisir que nos sages Ministers et tous les gens éclairés de ce Pays, n'ont cessé de rendre avec moi, témoignage à votre prudence, à vos talents et à votre conduite en Europe. Je réfléchis de plus qu'il vous est échapé de me dire, en reglant nos comptes, que le congrès général s'était engagé envers vous lorsqu'il vous envoya en Europe, à vous payer une commission de cinq pour cent sur tous les achats de marchandises que vous pouriez faire pour lui et quoique vous n'ayés pas poussé plus loin l'explication, J'ai pu deviner que vous n'etes pas tout à fait sans inquiétude aujourd'hui sur l'accomplissement de cette promesse. Mais, comme J'ai beaucoup moins cherché à faire une Speculation de fortune de mes envois à vos amis, que je me suis livré au

généraux desir d'être utile a une brave nation qui conquérirait le premier bien de l'homme, la liberté, je ne pourrais voir sans une extrême affliction que son premier agent, que celui qui m'a tant aidé de ses lumières et de ses travaux, restât sans dédomagement en récompense.

En conséquence, Monsieur, je prends la résolution de vous allouer, en vous priant de l'accepter de moi, une commission de deux pour cent sur les retours que me fera le congrès général, soit en argent, soit en marchandises, pour la masse des achats en Europe dont nous avons réglé les comptes ; mais dans le cas seulement où vos ennemis entraîneraient le congrès à vous faire l'injustice de vous refuser la commission qu'il vous a promise et qui vous est si légitimement due sur ces achats.

Cette lettre, Monsieur, vous servira de titre pour exiger de moi, ou de mes ayant-cause, la commission de deux pour cent que je vous offre, en y joignant seulement la preuve que le congrès vous aurait fait l'injustice d'un refus entier et absolu d'une commission quelconque sur cet objet. Je ne vous offre qu'un faible dédomagement de vos peines, mais aussi je le prends sur portion d'une commission de dix pour cent allouée pour les miennes et qui, vous le savez, est bien loin de remplir tous les vides affreux que ces achats, mes envois et les retards de paiement pendant tant d'années ont causé dans mes affaires.

Reçevés donc cette commission, je vous prie, comme un témoignage de l'estime, de l'affection et de tous les Sentiments avec lesquels J'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur,

Votre très humble et très obeissant Serviteur,

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

Connu en Amérique pendant mes envois sous la raison de Rodrique Hortales et Comp.

*Thomas Mss.*

## TRANSLATION.

Paris, Sept. 11th, 1781.

SIR,—A full statement of all our accounts has afforded to both of us a new occasion of estimating all the difficult circumstances attending your first commission received from Congress to obtain in Europe supplies for your countrymen and to purchase for them every sort of materials and munitions possible without other means, resources, or credit than the authenticity of your credentials. I recall, moreover, the ardor, the care, the persistency, and the exertions with which you commenced, continued, and, finally, concluded the delicate task of forwarding the consignments prepared by me for shipment to America.

If your enemies have subsequently succeeded in belittling the value of your political or commercial services in the opinion of those whom you represented, it is a misfortune for your Country and for you ; and, as an early and a constant witness of your exertions to serve your Country, I cannot but deplore it.

It was these very services of yours that inspired me with the greatest regard, esteem, and friendship for you, especially since our Ministry and all intelligent men in our nation have, in common with myself, invariably recognized your sagacity, ability, and irreproachable conduct. I also recall that, in stating our accounts, you inadvertently mentioned that Congress, when sending you to Europe, promised to you a commission of five per cent. upon all purchases that you might succeed in making. Although you did not pursue the subject, I suspected that you are at present somewhat anxious in regard to the fulfillment of this promise.

For myself, because I have been influenced by an inspiring desire to assist a brave people to win Liberty—the supreme good of mankind—rather than to

conduct a profitable speculation, I cannot hear without distress that their first representative, and one whose ability and exertions have rendered me such efficient aid, should remain without sufficient reimbursement.

I have, therefore, decided, Sir, to offer to you, and I beg that you will accept, a commission of two per cent. on all returns that I may receive from Congress, whether they consist of money or goods; that is, on every purchase included in our accounts, yet only in the event that your enemies prevail in influencing Congress to withhold from you the promised commission justly due to you on these purchases.

This letter will serve as an order on me, or my factors, for the two per cent. commission hereby offered in connection with the proof that Congress has done you the injustice to absolutely and entirely refuse you any commission whatever on these transactions.

This is but a poor return for your trouble; but, on my part, I deduct it from a commission of ten per cent. allowed to me, which, as you know, is far from repairing the immense losses suffered by me in consequence of my purchases, consignments, and the delay in payments extending over so many years. Accept this commission, then, I beg of you, as a testimonial of regard and affection, and of every consideration with which I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your very humble and very obedient servant,

CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS.

Known in America, during my shipments, by the title of Rodrigue Hortales and Co.

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PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

*Philadelphia, Wednesday, September 12, 1781. The Committee, consisting of Mr. Clymer, Mr. Lovell,*

Mr. Sherman, to whom was referred a letter from S. Deane, of the 15th of May last, report :

That provision is made for the examination of Mr. Deane's accounts by the appointment of a vice consul. Whereupon

*Ordered*, That Mr. Deane be informed of that appointment.

*Journals of Congress.*

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Sept. 12th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I should have replied to yours of the 28th ulto. sooner, but for expectation of a letter from Capt. Robinson which I received last evening. I confess that I cannot see why insurers at Nantes should ask 10 per cent. more on a neutral than on an open and direct adventure ; for supposing the British to pay no regard to neutral flags, still this does not increase the risque, but must only render the chance equal, at most. The advantages which Capt. Robinson, as well as myself, proposed from Ostend, were that a swift sailing cutter might be purchased ready for the sea, and of course no loss of time ; that goods might be procured at Ostend, the most suitable for the American market, and at the best rates ; that a neutral flag might secure the vessel whilst passing the north seas ; and that such a vessel sailing in October or November would, going north about for Boston or Portsmouth, run very little risque, whatever her papers might be, and on her arrival in America would command a handsome profit, if we were disposed to sell her.

These reasons had weight with us at the time, and still have with me, though you, from greater experience and knowledge, must be a better judge in this matter. Capt. Robinson writes me that you are about building a vessel for the trade between America and Nantes, and proposes that Mr. Sebor and myself should take

an interest ; though I know of no gentleman with whom I would sooner be concerned in the equipment and command of a vessel, yet I have these objections. The building a vessel will take up much time, and, built on the present war construction for sailing only, will not sell for any thing near her value on a peace, which to me appears probable the coming winter ; at least if peace should not take place, the British continuing superior in the American seas, as well as on the continent, little or no commerce can remain with America after this year. Rodney is undoubtedly gone for North America with nearly the whole of his fleet, which will continue the superiority of the enemy on our coasts as long as he remains there, which he probably will until Monsr. de Grasse leaves Boston, where he is gone, by the best accounts. These reasons have induced me rather to be concerned in a swift cutter direct from Ostend to Portsmouth in New Hampshire than in any other American adventure. I had the pleasure of passing a day at St. Germain, and to find Mrs. Williams perfectly recovered. As to news, we have none of any consequence from America, or any other quarter, except what you will see in the papers. This campaign will prove most probably as indecisive in Europe as the preceding ones, except the taking of Minorca, of which there appears to me great probability, should be followed with decisive consequence. If you receive any news from America, I pray you to communicate it to me by the first post. I am, with great sincerity, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Jonathan Williams, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO WILLIAM ROBINSON.

Paris, Sept. 12th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 8th last evening, and, having written to Mr. Williams this day on the



subject, need not be particular in this, as it would only be a repetition of what I have said to him, and which he will communicate to you. At present my views are turned to the prosecution of the plan we talked of from Ostend, by some means or other; should it fail, or should I alter my sentiments from any new events or new lights on the subject, and resolve to make any adventure direct from France, I shall, on every account, prefer a concern with you and Mr. Williams to any other in that way; and Mr. Sebor, who presents his best respects to you, is of the same sentiments. I have the honor to be, with sincere esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Capt. William Robinson.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Paris, Sept. 13th, 1781.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am but this moment made acquainted with the present opportunity for sending to America, and the Courier Express goes off immediately. I have only time, therefore, to tell you I am at present well, though a few days since ill with a fever and a lax. I wrote you the 10th of May last a long letter, and have received none from you or any of my friends in America, Mr. Morris excepted, since the date of March last. My son is at Ghent, in Flanders, where I intend to go in a few days to pass the fall. My patience is exhausted, and my affairs ruined by the unexampled conduct of Congress, who have detained me here—it is now more than a year—waiting for the appointment of an auditor to settle my accounts, which in reality I believe they never wish or desire to have settled. But I may not add, save that I will write

you again soon, and that I am most affectionately  
yours,

S. DEANE.

My compliments to all friends, particularly to Col. G. Wyllys ; and if you have not done it already, shew him the letter I wrote you the 10th of May last. Nothing has since occurred to contradict my then sentiments, but every day's experience confirms them.

Barnabas Deane, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JAMES WILSON.

Paris, Sept. 19th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—My last letter to you was of the 10th of May, since when I have seen Mr. Grand but once, and then the affair of your appointment remained in the same stage as when I wrote you formerly. As to the mast affair, nothing is done, or can be during the war, as France is ever disposed to neglect her navy during peace. I think the prospect but discouraging and doubtful, at least with this Court, and it appears to me to be still more so with that of Spain. No one will have anything to do at present with land adventures in America, and very few with any other. Its being known that a merchant has made, or is about to make, any considerable adventure to America, is of itself sufficient to hurt his credit in France at this time. For myself, almost every thing I depended on when I left America has failed. I built great hopes on the mast contracts, and had good right so to do at the time. I presumed that something might be done with lands, and I flattered myself that our public credit was not so low in Europe, but that Loan Office Certificates would sell for at least what they cost in America ; but in particular I was confident that Congress, after suffering me to be calumniated as a public defaulter, and in effect treating me as such themselves, would certainly have an auditor ready to meet me in the exam-

ination and settlement of my accounts, and that they would seek rather than avoid a scrutiny; but I have not been less deceived in this than in my other expectations. I am sensible they have much on their hands; but as they cannot expect to have less for a long time to come, and as one half hour was sufficient for the giving the necessary orders on the subject, it is impossible to reconcile their pretensions that I owe them money with their evading and refusing a settlement, so long and urgently solicited on my part. With regard to political affairs, I gave you unreservedly my sentiments in my letter of the 10th May, and nothing has occurred since to alter them. On the contrary, the events and measures since have all tended to confirm me in my opinion of the present real object and probable issue of the war. The present campaign in Europe, if really a little parading at sea, merits the name, will be more indecisive than even I could have imagined. The Dutch fought a very good battle, it is true. They did themselves great honor in proving to the world that their seamen have not, as has been generally presumed, degenerated or lost their antient skill and bravery in sea operations; but no consequence has followed to effect either party materially.

The combined fleets of France and Spain, after being at sea a few weeks, have separated and retired. The Spaniards keep on the siege of Gibraltar, and have invaded Minorca. The latter may probably be taken, but the British trade, having for many years been declining in the Mediterranean, and not like to revive, the loss of Minorca can cause very little or no sensation in England, now wholly taken up with the recovering America at any rate. For the forwarding this, a fresh body of troops will go over next month. It will consist of about 6,000, and will probably arrive somewhere to the southward, at Charleston or in Chesapeake Bay, about the last of December. The talk of peace has subsided for sometime past. The leisure which next winter will afford may revive it, but I fear

will not produce any thing in reality. This is, in brief, a sketch of affairs in this part of the world, so far as an impartial bystander is capable of judging. I enclose you an authentic list of the ships which were on the stocks in England in April last. Many of them have been since launched, but I am not able to point them out particularly; but the list will shew you what the preparations are on one side for a continuance of the war, and on what my opinion as to it is, in part, founded. I have nothing material to add, but am, with compliments to Mrs. Wilson, and the most sincere respect and esteem, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

James Wilson, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC HAZLEHURST.

Paris, Sept. 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I duly received yours of the 17th. Your fellow citizen Shaffer is still in confinement. He has commenced a suit against the men he has been concerned with, but, from what I can learn, they have spread their nets so compleately round him, and have such advantages from his own unparalleled ignorance and folly, that I suspect he will find it difficult to obtain his own enlargement, and more so, to obtain any satisfaction. He sold the vessel to them, as he says, really for 20,000 livres, and no more, even nominally, and was paid in merchandize not worth one half the money, such as cut silk velvets; and among other trumpery a clock was set down at near forty guineas, which, I am told, is not worth five. Not content with this, they induced him to acknowledge in the bill of sale the receipt of sixty thousand; and, as the finishing piece of his folly, he signed an agreement that if the vessel was not worth the money, he would refund. This is his story; and, though from many

circumstances I am inclined to believe it nearly true, yet the folly of it is too extravagant to gain much credit against his own written testimony to the contrary, which they produce in their bill of sale and agreement. By this specimen of his conduct, you will form an idea of his situation. Gillon's conduct would surprize me, if I had not within two or three years past been witness to so many extravagant proceedings of our countrymen that I am now beyond being surprized at any thing. I am, however, glad that he carried his passengers with him, and wish they may arrive safe. Pray, have you any intelligence from Mr. Dana since he left Amsterdam? I hear Mr. Adams is sick. Is he getting better? It has been said that he intends soon for America. I know not how to credit it, but you can tell me if the report is true or not. Address your next letter, under cover, to Mr. Jean Louis Catres, merchant, at Ghent, for which place I shall set out in four or five days, and from whence I shall write you on my arrival. We have nothing new from America, or from any other quarter. I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Isaac Hazlehurst.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO THOMAS MUMFORD.\*

Paris, Sept. 24th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours covering a bill for 1200 livres for use of your nephew, which was paid, and the money delivered to him. He is still with Doctor Franklin, and it is with pleasure I assure you that I think no young man could have improved more than what he has done in 12 months. As to fixing him at Amsterdam, it is hardly possible to do it

\* Read before Congress; see Proceedings, Jan. 17, 1782. Also printed as an intercepted letter, without the postscript, in *The Royal Gazette*, April 24, 1782.

in the present situation of affairs in that country, where all business is, in a manner, suspended ; and it is, in my opinion, by no means advisable. I have been twice in Holland, and have many acquaintance there who are of the same way of thinking on this subject. It is almost as difficult to find him a place in France where his advantages will any way equal the expences ; in short, except the language, I know of but very little that he could acquire in any of the trading towns in France which would be of use to him as an American merchant, for which you design him. With Doctor Franklin he will be at no expence but for cloaths ; and, disposed as he is to be oeconomical, that will not be great. He will be kept close to business, and will acquire the language, and at the same time a much more extensive knowledge of the world than he could in any counting house I could place him in. The Doctor, being obliged by Congress to act here as their banker, their consul, &c., as well as their minister, must, of course, keep a sort of counting house, the principal part of which business will employ your nephew's whole time. It does already, so that he but seldom can get leisure time even to pay me a visit. These considerations have induced me to recommend his remaining where he is, at least until next spring, by which time we may probably be better able to form a judgment of the continuance and issue of the war than we can at this time. I wrote you a long political letter the 15th of June last, in which you will find my sentiments without reserve, and too explicit to leave me any thing to add on that subject in this, except that events have since justified, at least in Europe and the West Indies, the utmost of what I ventured to predict as to the operations and issue of this campaign, and serve to confirm the sentiments which, ever since my return to Europe, I have had as to the real and only actual object of the war and of its final issue. Having no certain intelligence from America since about the 20th of July, am ignorant

what turn the war may have taken with you, but, unless it is conducted with more energy and decision on your side than on this, I fear that my apprehensions, gloomy as they are, will soon be realized. By the appointment of Commissioners on the part of Congress to treat of peace, and by persons arriving from America, I find that your hopes are sanguine as to that wished for event. It is with pain that I find it my duty to undeceive you ; there is not at present any prospect of peace, nor is there even any serious talk of it. Great Britain does not appear likely to be the first to propose it. Her national debt has been increased greatly, but otherways she is every way stronger than in the first year of the war. The spirit of the nation increases with its enemies ; her commerce has not suffered on the whole ; and as a demonstrative proof of this fact, incredible as it may appear in America, the last year's exports from Great Britain were greater, and the revenue arising thereon amounted to a greater sum, than in any former year since that Kingdom existed. The monied men in every part of Europe, even in France and Holland, place their money in the English funds. Affairs in the East Indies have taken a favorable turn for them, and, in short, they appear ready to face their enemies in every part of the world. As to America, Great Britain considers us of so much importance that, sooner than acknowledge our independance, she will play the desperate game of all or nothing. These may be disagreeable truths, but they are not less true, nor less important, on account of their being unpalatable. If we turn our attention to Spain and Holland, can we be so blind as not to see the motives of their conduct, and in what light they regard us ? They refuse to receive our Minister, or to know any thing of us or our cause ; and the former, by sending at her expence, the garrison of Pensacola to reinforce Gen. Clinton's army at New York, has acted openly and unequivocally against America. I assure you it is

considered in no other light by men of reflection here, and it must be an insult on the common sense of mankind to attempt to give it any other construction. This event justifies every thing I have ventured to affirm or conjecture as to the real disposition of Spain towards us. Before you receive this, you will have the news of the separation and return of the combined fleets, which closes the campaign in Europe on the part of France and Spain. The Dutch fleet for the Baltic is returned into port, and the voyage given over, by which no naval stores will be received from that quarter this year, either by France, Spain, or Holland. The British fleet under Admiral Darby has, in a most surprizingly expeditious manner, been augmented to 40 sail of the line, of which ten are three deckers. On the separation of the combined fleets, this fleet became masters of these seas, and have since separated on different expeditions ; part of them into the North Sea to annoy the Dutch, a part to cruise for the home French West India fleet, and a part to convoy a reinforcement of about 5,000 troops to America, supposed for Chesapeake Bay. The Spaniards have invaded Minorca, and continue the siege of Gibraltar. Should they succeed against both, the garrisons, consisting in the whole of near 10,000 veterans, may be sent, like that of Pensacola, to reinforce Gen. Clinton at New York ; whilst the loss of one or both of those places will occasion very little sensation in England, the trade of that nation into the Mediterranean having been for some time since very inconsiderable.

The Dutch fleet under Admiral Zoutman did themselves great honor in the battle with Admiral Parker. It was a well fought action on both sides, but the consequences have been unfavorable for Holland, as their battle fleet has thereby been detained for this year in their ports. Holland affords at this time a most melancholy prospect ; 5 or 6,000 sail of vessels, but lately employed in exchanging the productions of one coun-



try for those of another, and thereby promoting the general happiness of mankind, stripped and laid up, and the numerous bodies of sailors and artificers out of employ and in want of their usual and certain means of support, gives to a feeling and reflecting mind painful sensations. I confess that when at Amsterdam, in July last, I found the scene too much for me, and that the sight of between 2 and 3,000 ships in that port only, in that useless and deserted state, affected me beyond what I could have had any idea of at a distance. You may imagine that this desertion of commerce will naturally man the navy. It is natural to suppose this, but the fact is, that the Dutch find it very difficult to man the few ships they have, and the cause is, that of the seamen employed in the Dutch service, not one fifth are really natives, but are composed of Swedes, Danes, Hamburgers, &c., from the North, invited into the employ by the high wages given, and the certainty of finding service; but, on a suspension of commerce, these men having nothing local to attach them, disappear and seek other employ wherever it is to be found. Of this circumstance the English have availed themselves, and gentlemen of credit assured me at Amsterdam that at least 10,000 sailors in their employ before the war had passed into the service of England, either in the merchant or men of war ships. I really consider a fleet of Dutch men of war, well equipped, and manned with Dutch sailors, as more formidable to Great Britain than the separate or combined fleets of all her other enemies, for I esteem the Dutch to be at least the second best navigators in the world, but under the most favorable circumstances such a fleet cannot appear for some time to come; and the Republic, naturally averse to a war, slow in their operations, and at least wishing for peace and a revival of their commerce, must improve the first favorable moment to obtain a separate peace, which has already been proposed on their part, and rejected by England; but it is probable that the

proposal may be revived this winter. Russia and the other northern powers find their account in the war too sensibly to wish to put an end to it. The British manufactures formerly consumed by us are now sent that way, and the gross materials received from America before the war are taken from thence, and at a lower price, which will account for the increase, instead of the expected diminution of the British commerce. These general reflections will, as they are founded on indisputable facts, strengthen what I before wrote you, and lead you to reflect and inquire seriously where and in what condition we shall land after this general storm. I have already been too free with your patience to add any thing more to this letter than my most affectionate compliments to my sister Mumford, your spouse, and to all the family, and that I am, most affectionately,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S.—By the unparalleled conduct of Congress towards me, I am still spending my time, and the little that is left me, without a possibility of doing any thing either for myself or others. I stated my account with vouchers soon after my return, and proved a ballance in my favor of more than 300,000 livres. I have since wrote to Congress repeatedly, praying for a settlement. They have refused either to appoint an auditor or to suffer me to receive one livre of the sum due to me, thus adding to their ingratitude the most cruel injustice. I am finally resolved to seize on their property whenever I can find it in Europe. I have already delayed this measure too long for my interest, and as to their honor or credit, they cannot suffer at present in Europe on that account ; but it is with reluctance I go on this measure, on account of my friends in America, many of whom still imagine that their political salvation depends on that body which has for near three years past invariably pursued measures pregnant

with the moral, as well as the political, destruction of our once happy country. I have no prospect of returning soon to America. I wish it exceedingly, and to have the pleasure of again enjoying my old friends and acquaintances; but whilst every thing continues in the present state of anarchy and distress, unhappy as I must be on this side the water, I should still be more so on the other. I shall go for Flanders in a few days. My son has been there for some months already, and probably may pass the winter there. God grant it may be the last of the war! But though I pray, my faith is, I fear, even less than a grain of mustard seed. Remember me affectionately to General Saltonstall and your brother and family. Once more Adieu.

Thomas Mumford, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Paris, Sept. 24th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received your favor of the 18th last evening; your motives for being concerned at all in vessels are perfectly reasonable and just, and in your situation I should reason and act in the same manner. Interest is most certainly the *touch stone* with merchants as well as with men of other professions, and the principal and secret spring, in whatever way it may operate, which animates and directs their undertakings or adventures; and though an honest merchant will never deviate from the path of honor and justice to promote his interest, yet it can never be expected of him to quit the line which interest marks out for him out of compliance to the proposals of any one. You see that we agree in our sentiments on this subject, as I think we have ever done on most others. With respect to my proposed adventure, it is as yet in air, as I may say; for though the persons to whom I have

communicated my plan have approved of it, and offered to become adventurers, yet I am not over sanguine myself as to the execution. The anarchy and confusion which prevails in a greater or less degree in every part of our distressed and distracted country, give a man reason to pause and reflect before he commits himself or his friends to become adventurers in a commerce with it. Acts of Assemblies have been passed in most of the States, on the recommendations of Congress, to prohibit all British manufactures, however purchased and imported ; and though regular government is nominally and ostensibly established in all the States, yet every day's experience demonstrates its weakness and inefficiency when opposed or dictated to by committees which spring up on every occasion as suddenly as mushrooms, and but too often from similar causes. I shall, however, set out for the Low Countries in four or five days, and if I find a tolerable certain prospect of sales in America, and remittances, I shall pursue the adventure I proposed ; if not, I shall quit it and remain inactive until the times alter so as to afford us more agreeable and certain prospects. I believe there is now no doubt that De Grasse and Rodney are both gone for the Continent. This may produce something, but most probably nothing more than a ballance of marine force, leave our countrymen exposed to the incursions of the enemy, and turn America over to the chapter of accidents which another year will open ; but viewing things in the light which I do, I ought not to touch on politics. I shall probably write you again before I leave Paris, and let you know where to direct to me should you be disposed to make any adventure on my plan, in which your interest alone ought to be consulted.

I am, most sincerely, Dear Sir,

Yours &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Williams.

*Thomas Mss.*

## TO BARNABAS DEANE.\*

Paris, Sept. 26th, 1781.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote you the 10th of May last, in which I was so particular in politics that I shall say little on the subject in this. As to news, you will see what little there is in the papers, which amounts to nothing more than that the combined fleets of France and Spain separated the beginning of this month, and returned into port, the former into Brest, the latter into Cadiz. Gibraltar is still besieged, and Minorca invaded by Spaniards. The Dutch lately lost a 74 gun ship which run a ground by accident on their coast. They have, it is said, given over all thoughts of sending out any fleet, either of ships of war or merchant-men this year, the season being advanced, and the British fleet under Admiral Darby said to amount to 40 sail of the line, having become masters of the sea since the separation of the combined fleets. Thus you see that nothing decisive has either been done or attempted in Europe this campaign; and if the war takes the same turn in America, we must expect it to continue at least for another year. No talk of peace at present. England and Holland are both making great naval preparations. A commission has been received from Congress appointing the Hon. Messrs. Franklin, Jay, Adams, Laurens, and Jefferson commissioners to treat of peace on the part of America in an expected General Congress. I fear from this circumstance that you have in this, as in too many other instances, been buoyed up and deceived by groundless intelligence. There is not at present any probability that such a Congress will be held; nor if it should, that Commissioners or Ministers from America will be admitted. It is my opinion, founded on the uniform conduct of Spain from her first declaration to her sending the garrison of Pensacola to

\* See Proceedings of Congress, Jan. 17, 1782.

reinforce Gen. Clinton, that Spain would object to the admission of the American Commissioners, and to our independancy, should the proposition be made ; so that she must speak positively. My opinion of the Dutch politics on that subject (and I have good information) is the same. You will say I am a Cassandra, prophesying evil only. I cannot help it. America will one day (I pray it may not be a distant one) judge whether those who now flatter and deceive their country-men with groundless intelligence and vain hopes, or those who endeavor to open their eyes to the true state of the politics and views of the contending powers, have acted the part of real friends and patriots. To that day of impartial review and cool reflection I appeal with confidence. You wrote to Sebor on the subject of sending you out goods, by which I find you are as much deceived as to the commerce as you are with regard to the politics of this part of the world. Our credit is too low to obtain any thing without ready cash or unquestionable European security. I know of no merchant in France who has not lost by his American adventures, and too many have been totally ruined. It being known that a man has large American connections. is of itself sufficient to hurt his credit. From this you will see that without remittances in hand nothing can be done ; and for myself I have been disappointed in everything on which I depended when I left America, most cruelly so by Congress and Laurens. I shall go for the Netherlands in a few days, where my son has already been for some months, and where I may probably pass some time to lessen expence, which has already fell too heavily on me. I have, indeed, some thoughts of making an adventure from Ostend this winter, but your laws against English goods, however imported, and the unsettled state of every thing in America, where committees which spring up every little while like mushrooms are above all law, as well as justice, give me cause to hesitate. I confess that the gloomy prospect which our public

affairs have presented for some time past has rendered me exceedingly unhappy, and makes me fear that public as well as private tranquillity and happiness will be unknown in our country during our lives, and I am too much attached to America to be happy in another country. I pray you to make my compliments to all friends, to Col. G. Wyllys in particular. Wishing you peace and content, I am, Dear Brother,

Yours Affectionately,

S. DEANE.

B. Deane, Esq.

I Certify the above to be a true and exact copy of the original, delivered and sworn by Mr. Marshall.

ROBT. R. LIVINGSTON.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN JAY.

Paris, September 26th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Our mutual friend Doctor Franklin told me last night that he should write to you on Saturday, and offered to send my letter inclosed in his packet. I therefore embrace the opportunity to excuse my not having written to you for some time past.

I received yours of the 16th June last but a day or two before I set out on a journey to Holland, where I was absent for near six weeks, and on my return actually forgot that I was a letter in your debt, and, having nothing material to write, I neglected to write at all. Though this may not wholly justify me, it is simply the true cause of my silence.

Since the receipt of yours, Commander Gillon has sailed from Holland in the ship *L'Indien* for America. Mr. Searle and many others went passengers with him, but he, in a strange way, left behind him all the goods and stores purchased in Holland by orders of Mr. Laurens, junr., for Congress, by which they will not go out this season.

We have nothing new from America. I have seen the papers from Boston and Philadelphia to about the 20th of July, but they are filled with little except party disputes, gasconnades in the stile of Mr. Searle, and plenty of personal abuse, for which our friend G. Morris comes in for a large share, and the cautious and smooth Mr. Duane for a still larger. The Freeman's Journal of Philadelphia and the Boston Gazette are outrageous and meanly abusive. I see my name now and then comes in as one of Mr. Duane and Gen. Arnold's friends. I know how to feel for Mr. Duane. Though I by no means approve of his conduct in Congress while I was in America, and though I think his temporizing and intriguing with a certain set of men, whom he never loved, merit some punishment, yet the present is too severe. For me, I have been so long innured to abuse and invective that it does not affect me personally in the least; but that licentiousness in stigmatizing men in public trust with the vilest and most abusive epithets and characters, which prevails and is encouraged in America, appears to me a fatal symptom of that universal anarchy which is more to be dreaded than despotism itself, and which, I think, is at the door.

[Cipher translated. Carmichael writes long letters every post to Franklin. He has made many efforts to reconcile himself to Beaumarchais, hitherto without success. I am very easy since I find that you know his temper and disposition.]

I see that you are named as one of the commissioners to treat of peace; and as Mr. Jefferson will not probably accept, as Mr. Laurens will not be at liberty to act, and as Mr. Adams, who has long since been disgusted with everything in Europe, will on this, I suspect, return suddenly to America, will not this new appointment lead you this way?

If it should, let me know in season, for in that case I will try to shorten the time I propose to be absent on a tour into the northern part of France and



the Low Countries, to have the pleasure of seeing you. I have no faith in the success of your negotiation, or, indeed, in your being able ever to enter on one; yet I shall be happy to spend a few days with you, and proportionally more so if you succeed in making peace, as I at present so much despair of it.

You will, then, in my opinion, merit the title of an angel of peace and glad tidings, and I shall ever after respect you in that light, which, highly as I esteem you at present, will add to that with which I am ever

Your sincere friend and very humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

Hon. John Jay, Esq.

P. S.—My compliments to Mrs. Jay. Consult her on a voyage to Paris. If she does not declare with me in favor of it, I will be content to say no more about it. Inclose your letters for me to Doctor Franklin, who will have my address from time to time during my absence. I shall write to you again before I set out, and on the subject of my accounts with Congress, which have long since been ready for settlement.

Mr. McKean is chosen President of Congress; Gen. Nelson, Governor of Virginia, in place of Gov. Jefferson, for what reason I know not. They are both of them, worthy men, and when I left the country stood high in the esteem of their countrymen.

*Thomas and Jay Mss.*

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TO FREDERICK GRAND.

Paris, October 2d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—With the accounts which I send you inclosed I take the liberty of making a few observations in addition to those which I made you verbally yesterday. In the first place, you will see by the accounts that the amount of all the monies charged me by Congress is £215,605, 17, 10, out of which the sum of £67,332, 0, 5, is to be deducted, on which no dispute

can arise, as Mr. Solier charged the same monies to Mr. Robert Morris, in his accounts transmitted to America two years ago ; this, then, will leave the sum of £148,273, 17, 5, on me to account for. My payments to prisoners, to Mr. Carmichael, to officers going to America, and actually in the service of Congress, with the other payments specified in my account No. 1, amount to £172,589, 15s. 3d., by which you see there remains a ballance of £24,315, 17, 10, due to me, independent of my salary and expences, and of my commissions, to which, by contract, I am intitled, as well as by strict justice.

The sum of £51,957, 13, for more than four years service will not appear extravagant to you or to any one who is acquainted with the services I had to perform ; nor will the sum of £100,949, 1, 4, be thought extraordinary for four years and seven months expences, in which the charges of two voyages to Europe are included. I know not what Doctor Franklin's or Mr. Lee's or Mr. Adams's expences may have been. I know that Mr. Lee wrote to Congress that he could not live for less than three thousand pounds sterling per annum, which is more than half of what I have charged Congress for four years and seven months. With regard to my commission account, I have charged commissions only on the business undertaken and completed by me solely, agreeable to my instructions from the Secret and Commercial Committees, and at the rate contracted with them for. Doctor Franklin was at the time a member of both those Committees ; he drew my instructions himself, which I have in his own handwriting, signed by him, Mr. Morris, Mr. Jay, and others. Notwithstanding I made purchases for Congress, to the amount of several millions in cloathing and other articles, of Messrs. Sabbatier & Desprez, of Mr. Monthieu and others, on which any one of the Commercial Agents of Congress would have charged five per cent. commissions, yet as my colleagues were present, I have not charged any thing,

but contented myself with the pittance allowed by Congress as salary; and though the commissions are considerable, they are no more than what Congress have ever allowed their Commercial Agents in France, and it ought to be considered that I have now spent more than five years on no other business, and been forced to advance my own money to a considerable amount, besides the irreparable damages I have otherways suffered. I have long prayed for a settlement, and though I have intreated to have my accounts submitted to the strictest enquiry by men of ability and character in France, knowing to the whole transaction, yet it has been to no purpose hitherto. I have troubled you with the state of my accounts and this representation, that, as you have been a witness of the services I was engaged in, and how I performed them, you may know in what manner I have been rewarded. Although I have many articles in my accounts, especially the small expences for which I have no vouchers, yet so urgent am I to have the affair closed, that I would even be content to suffer the loss, even of every thing for which I have not vouchers, unjust as it would be, rather than suffer any longer in the manner I have done. I ought to apologize for giving you the pain of this narration, but I know you will excuse me, as I do it to demonstrate to you the rectitude of my conduct and the justice of my demands on Congress. I have the honor to be, with the most sincere esteem and attachment, Dear Sir,

Your most Obedt. and very humble Servt.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Grand.

[Enclosure.]

The Honorable Congress of the United States of America to Silas Deane, their Agent and Commissioner.

## No. 1.

## DEBTOR.

To Cash advanced to Prisoners from August, 1776, to March, 1778, as pr Account of particulars delivered, No. 1.....	19,223	7	10
To ditto to Mr. Carmichael at several times, as per Account of do. No. 2.....	9,200		
To ditto to Officers going out to serve in America and to Americans employed in the service of the United States, as per Account of do. No. 3.....	47,899	12	6
To ditto remitted to London per order of secret Committee and for service of the United States .....	2,905	7	
To ditto paid sundry expresses and for hire of voitures as per Account, No. 4.....	3,107	4	6
To ditto paid Mr. Monthieu as a gratification in the purchase of the Magazine at Nantes .....	1,824		
To ditto paid for linen for furniture....	1,127	17	9
To ditto for china or porcelain, &c., for ditto.....	1,075	0	6
To ditto for plate for ditto.....	1,880	12	3
	4,083	10	6
As per Account of Mr. Grand, Banker, who purchased them, and on my leaving Paris the above were left for the use of the Commissioners and never returned to me.			
To ditto paid for the encyclopedia for Doctor Franklin	852		
To ditto paid Mr. Chaumont's Account for sundries, No. 5.....	2,986	0	6
To ditto paid for a horse bought in England, and expences.....	1,218	7	
To ditto for three ditto do.....	1,922		
	3,140	7	
N. B. The above horses left to be sold by Mr. Chaumont for Account of Congress.			
To the net proceeds of a coach credited Mr. Grand in his Account with Congress.....	2,000		
To paid expences to Toulon for self and 4 American Captains and of baggage pr Account, No. 6.....	8,036	5	
To my Salary from November, 1776, the time of my receiving my Commission, to January, 1781 : the last six months consider as in settling the Congress' Accounts, 4 years and 2 months .....	51,957	13	
To sundry wrong charges, as per Account .....	67,332	0	5
To total amount of expences of every kind from engaging in Congress service January, 1776, to my return to Paris in August, 1780, being 4 years and 7 months, pr Account general No. 1 of particulars..	100,949	1	4
	Livres 325,946	9	7

## CREDITOR.

By total amount of Monies charged in Congress, Books, folio 11 (viz.), being amount of all the monies charged by Mr. Grand and by Mr. Solier, Bankers for Congress .....	150,389	7	11
By Ballances charged Congress in Account No. 3.....	175,107	1	8
	<hr/>		
	Livres 325,496	9	7

Errors excepted. Paris, 20th April, 1781.

## No. 2.

Congress, by their Secret and Commercial Committees, contracted with Silas Deane, Esqr., to embark for France as the political and commercial agent of the thirteen then United Colonies, and intrusted him to purchase for, and on account of, said United Colonies, woolen and other merchandize to the amount of forty thousand pounds sterling; also cloathing, arms, ammunition, &c., sufficient for an army of twenty-five thousand men, as may be seen by the contracts and instructions of the 19th of Feb. and 2d of March, 1776, for which purchases it was stipulated and agreed to allow the said Silas Deane, Esq., a commission of 5 per cent. independant of his charges in making the purchases; it was at the same time agreed that, as the said Silas Deane, Esq., besides the commercial transactions entrusted to him, was commissioned and authorized to act as the political agent of the said thirteen Colonies, his expences should be paid, and an adequate and honorable compensation made him by Congress for his time. In the following Account nothing but his commissions and charges on the merchandize and stores, &c., contracted for by him are charged, and in his Account No. 1 he has not charged his time; but from Novr., 1776, the date of his receiving his commission to act as joint Commissioner of Congress with Messrs. Franklin and Lee.

## DEBTOR.

1776. To amount of sundries purchased of Messrs. J. and S. H. Delaps, viz.:		
Merchandise purchased and shipped in the Samuel, Capt. Hutchins, on Account of Congress, for Account of Messrs. Delaps..	60,606	11 0
Sundries supplied the Lucretia, Capt. Sarly.....	937	00 0
100 muids of salt, shipped on board Capt. Wm. Moore, on Account of Congress ..	2,892	13 9
10 casks of sulphur, shipped by Capt. Sarly .....	4,688	02 0
Sundries, by Capt. Jeremiah Morgan.....	10,463	10 7
	<hr/>	
	79,587	17 4
To commissions on 79,587 17 4 @ 5 per cent.....		3,979 07 0
Amount of sundries purchased of Monsr. Chaumont, viz.: 141 casks of salt petre, Wt. 100,041 @ 10 sous per hd., 50,020 livres; charges and freight, 2,251 8 6 .....	52,271	18 6
2,000 barrels of powder, shipped in the ship Duc de Duras to Mr. Bingham, at Martinico, per Account transmitted therewith, and for which S. Deane gave his Note to Mr. Chaumont...	186,399	15 0
12 pounders brass cannon and expences pr account..	42,127	12 6
	<hr/>	
	280,799	06 0
To commissions on 280,799 6 @ 5 per cent.....		14,039 19 0
Amount of sundries purchased of Mr. Beaumarchais, and shipped as follows, viz.:		
In the Amphitrite, pr Account.....	716,525	17 0

In the Seine, pr Account	596,569	03	1
In the Mercure, "	652,649	04	0
In the Amelia, "	210,896	03	3
In the Therese, "	924,219	17	6
In the Mere Boobie, "	65,061	17	7
In the Maria Catherine, pr			
Account .....	141,356	13	3
In the Flamand, pr Account	429,678	18	0
	3,736,957	13	8
To commissions on 3,736,957			
13 8 at 5 per cent .....		186,847	16 0
Amount of sundries contracted			
for and purchased of Mr.			
Monthieu, viz.:			
The Magazine at Nantes, pr			
Account, for which Silas			
Deane gave his Note.....	220,000	00	0
Articles for repairing of arms	6,416	00	0
Ballances of charter party for			
ships contracted for and			
sent to America (viz.), the			
surplus after Mr. Beaumar-			
chais's payments on that			
Account was deducted per			
Account, for which S.			
Deane gave his Note.....	112,000	00	0
Charter of the ship Duchess			
de Grammont.....	105,793	00	0
Ditto of the ship Flamand.	120,000	00	0
Ditto for 82 tons in the ship			
Duc de Choiseul .....	9,840	00	0
Ditto of the ship Duc de			
Grammont .....	85,000	00	0
	659,049	00	0
To commissions on 659,049 at 5			
per cent .....		32,952	09 0
To postage of letters charged by			
Mr. Delap .....	46	02	0
To ditto by Messrs. Germann			
Gerardot....	578	06	0
		624	08 0
To short charge in the commis-			
sion in casting up on the			
articles purchased of Mr.			
Beaumarchais .....		1	00 7
		Livres 238,445	00 7

## CREDITOR.

1776. By Cash and sundries, disbursements paid by Messrs. S. & J. H. Delaps on Account of S. Deane per Account settled June 29th, 1776.....	6,826 7 10
By Sundries, disbursements on Account of S. Deane per said Messrs. Delaps from June 29th, 1776, per his Account to Novr., 1777.....	17,930 18
1777. May 20. By Cash remitted by said Messrs. Delaps to Mr. Grand for Account of S. Deane....	17,419 7 1
By Cash received of Mr. Beaumarchais per his Account.....	23,039 17
	<hr/>
	65,216 9 11
By so much charged in Account No. 3.....	173,228 10 8
Errors excepted, Paris, April 20th, 1781.....	<hr/>
	Livres 238,445 0 7

## No. 3.

## DEBTOR.

To Balance of Account No. 1.....	175,107 1 8
" " " " No. 2 bro't down.....	173,228 10 8
	<hr/>
	Livres 348,335 12 4

## CREDITOR.

1780. By the proceeds of a horse delivered me on my return, but so extremely damaged that he was sold for only nine Louis d'ors.....	216
Ballance due exclusive of Interest.....	348,119 4
	<hr/>
	Livres 348,335 12 4

Errors Excepted.

Paris, April 20th, 1781.

SILAS DEANE.

No. 4 Missing.



## No. 5.

CONGRESS TO SILAS DEANE.

## DEBTOR.

To wrong charge of April 9th, 1777, being the disbursements on sloop Dolphin at Havre, by Mr. Eyries, who transacted the business, and at that time to cover his having concern in equipping armed vessels for Congress, drew under the signature of Hartcourt.....	9,706	16	5
To wrong charge included in the general charge of the 30th March, 1778 (viz.). Monies paid Mr. Williams, for which said Williams has accounted, being the Bills drawn by him on public Account, but accepted by S. Deane, as were most of his Bills.....	2,973	0	0
To wrong charge in Solier's Account to amount of 48,252. 4. 0. The whole received of S. Deane by Solier on his private Account was 10,784 Livres. The next was received on Account of R. Morris, Esq., and is by Pliarne Pennet & Co. (who furnished the monies), charged to said Morris in his private Account with them, as may be seen by their Account transmitted to said Morris at Philadelphia.....	48,252	4	0
	Livres 60,932 0 5		

*Thomas and Holbrooke Mss.*BENJAMIN FRANKLIN ON THE ACCOUNTS OF  
RAY DE CHAUMONT.

Mr. Franklin's Reply to Mr. Chaumont's answer respecting the observations of Mr. Franklin on his Account.

[Passy, October, 1781.]

Article 1. The charge of 3,189, 13, 4, Ballance of Mr. Deane's Acc't with M. de Chaumont.

Mr. F. has seen two Copies of this account, in which the Ballance differs widely. It does not appear by any

evidence produc'd in writing, or otherwise, that Mr. Deane has been acquainted with and approved of this demand against him. On the contrary, he has told Mr. F. that Mr. de Chaumont owed him a considerable sum of money, which from the then present situation of Mr. C.'s affairs could not be obtained, and which obliged him to ask a loan of money from Mr. F.; and as Mr. F. finds in the said account against Mr. Deane many articles which appear to him to relate to particular speculations and adventures in business between Mr. de Chaumont and him, that do not at all concern the public, and it farther appears that the sums actually credited in that account as paid to Mr. de Chaumont by Mr. Deane and Mr. Franklin as Commissioners of Congress, exceed the value of the supplies charged therein as furnished for the Congress, Mr. F. conceives that the charge of the ballance in question is not well placed in an account against the United States, and that he cannot without authority from Mr. Deane undertake to settle the private part of M. Chaumont's account against him, or to admit that the said ballance is due from him. Mr. Deane resides at Ghent, and Mr. C. may settle the matter with him by writing.

Art. 2.                    193 1 0 Mr. F. cannot understand this  
without seeing the acc't.

Art. 3.                    63                    is just.

" 4.                    1,803 9 3 allowed.

" 5.                    5,847 16 6 allowed.

" 6.                    25,970 6 0 allowed.

" 7.                    626 2 5 allowed.

" 8.                    12,000                    *Indemnité sur la Mere Bobie.*

This charge appears to me very high. I do not think it right to estimate it by tobacco, there being none at Boston to be shipp'd on such terms. They were allowed from Maryland, but the risque

			there was greater. I leave this, however, to the judgment of Mr. Grand.
Art. 9.	741,095	16 4	allowed.
2d Art. 9.	3,246	12 3	from Commission, &c., submitted to the judgment of Mr. Grand.
Art. 10.	428,330	2 8	allowed.
Art. 11.	240,000	0 0	allowed.
Art. 12.	500	0 0	Countage submitted to Mr. Grand, Mr. Franklin not understanding the answer of Mr. de Chaumont concerning the exchange.
Art. 13.	Rent		Mr. Franklin leaves this intirely to Mr. Grand, and shall be content if fixed as Mr. Chaumont proposed to him. To be decided by Mr. Grand.
Art. 14.			Mr. Franklin had never intimated to Congress that Mr. Chaumont owed him anything. It seems, therefore, unintelligible to him, that they should give Mr. Holker such a reason for not paying. Mr. Holker might, however, have obtained their drafts on Mr. Franklin if they had approved of the account. Gen. Lincoln might have purchased the goods partly on the public account, and partly for himself and officers. Mr. Franklin knows nothing of the matter, has receiv'd no orders relating to it, and he thinks that persons in one department, especially at so
Art. 15.	70,000		

great a distance, should not be apply'd to for payment of debts contracted by those in another.

Art. 16.

Mr. F. does not understand this, and leaves it to Mr. Grand.

Art. 17.

This also is for the same reason left to the judgment of Mr. Grand, with which Mr. F. will be satisfied.

*Holbrooke Mss.*

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TO CAPTAIN TROWBRIDGE.

Ghent, Oct. 14th, 1781.

SIR,—I was informed by Mr. De Neuville of your arrival at Amsterdam. Permit me, therefore, to ask of you at what time you left New Haven; whither there was any news of the French fleet, under the Count de Grasse, from St. Domingo; whither Admiral Digby or Admiral Hood had arrived at New York; where General Washington was with his army when you sailed, and what force he had with him; whither he proposed an attack on New York; what news you had from General Greene and from Virginia; and, in short, of the situation of our affairs in general when you left America. As it is now a long time since I have had any direct intelligence on which I could depend, you will greatly oblige me by giving me, in a letter which Mr. De Neuville will forward, an answer to the above; and also if you know any thing of my brother and friends at Wethersfield, and in what time you may probably sail for America. I shall be happy to have it in my power to render you equal services, and am, Sir,

Yours, etc.,

S. DEANE.

Capt. Trowbridge.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN DE NEUVILLE AND SONS.

Ghent, Oct. 14, 1781.

GENTLEMEN,—I this moment received your esteemed favor of the 4th instant, covering letters from Mr. B. Deane and Mr. Mumford, and return you my thanks for your attention to them, and offers of service in forwarding my letters to America. I shall probably pass four or five weeks here or in this neighbourhood, and I shall improve this opportunity of writing to America. I pray you to inform me nearly the time which Capt. Trowbridge will sail. You will please to direct your letters to care of Mr. John Louis Caters, merchant, at Ghent. Mr. Mumford, with whom you correspond, is a near relation and intimate friend of mine; he has a nephew at Paris, who has been with Doctor Franklin for a year past as a clerk in his office; he is about seventeen years of age, ingenious, steady, has had a good education, writes well, and speaks the French language tolerably. Mr. Mumford prays me to place him in some good counting house in Amsterdam or in France; and that if I prefer the former, that I would address myself to you on the subject. As I cannot but give the preference to Amsterdam on every account, I wish to know if you can give him a place in your house, or procure one for him with some one of your friends; it will be equal to him whither he enters immediately or three or four months hence, as he is improving in the French language where he is. Your favors on this subject will most sensibly oblige Mr. Mumford as well as myself. I have taken the liberty of inclosing a line for Capt. Trowbridge, and have the honor to be very respectfully, gentlemen,

Yours, etc.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. John De Neuville & Sons.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO ISAAC HAZLEHURST.

Ghent, Oct. 14, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. De Neuville writes me that Captain Trowbridge is arrived from New Haven to his address, that he had a short passage and brings good news, but does not tell me what the news is. You have undoubtedly seen Capt. Trowbridge. I pray you, therefore, to write me the substance of what intelligence he brings which may be depended on. Are the Congress goods, designed to have been sent under Commander Gillon's convoy, still at Amsterdam? I have not received any letters from Paris since I left it, nor seen either person or papers from which I could obtain any thing of any consequence. I will not, therefore, detain you farther than to assure you that I am most sincerely, dear sir,

Yours, etc.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Isaac Hazlehurst.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO HENNESSAY AND CO.

Ghent, Oct. 18th, 1781.

GENTLEMEN,—Mr. Catres shewed me a letter this morning, by which I am informed that a box containing books and instruments, and marked IC, was sent to your care. I, therefore, take the liberty of informing you that the books, &c., in the box are on my account, and to pray you to send them on addressed to Mr. J. L. Catres, or to Mr. Deane, chez la Veuve, merchant, pres st. Bavo a Gand. I have not received a bill of their first cost, but they amount to about 15 or 16 guineas, which I mention on account of the duties. I am ignorant of the law in such cases, but the books are second hand and for private use, and

will soon be carried out of this dominion, and, therefore, I should hope the duties would not be considerable. But whatever it may be, pray you to advance the money, and the same will be repaid with acknowledgments by, Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. Hennessay & Co., Ostend.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.

Ghent, Oct. 20th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—My letter to you of the 20th of May last must have given you my way of thinking as to our public and political interests. Every event on this side the water has tended to confirm me in those sentiments. They may possibly be different from yours at first view; but as the subject is the most important of any ever brought into discussion, you will not judge rashly or without weighing the reasons for and against, whatever your final judgment may be. I shall not esteem you the more for its agreeing with mine, nor the less for its difference; and I count too much on the liberality of your sentiments to imagine you will treat me otherways. If we differ on matters of politics, we may still agree on those of a private nature. If your observations and conclusions agree with mine, you ought to act an open and decisive part. Never, like *Arnold*, betray your trust, but quit the service and declare without reserve your reasons for it. On the contrary, if you are convinced that the weak, democratical government of Congress is the best for securing the liberty and happiness of America, I need not conjure you to proceed, for I know that you act from principle. But, my Dear Friend, after six severe campaigns, it is certainly time to breathe one moment, to look round you and forward to the final

issue of the contest, to reflect on the situation in which America will find herself at the close of the war, and in what circumstances you who have sacrificed the prime of your lives in the service will find yourselves at that period. You see foreign mercenaries every year increasing in our country; it is impossible that you should continue blind to the ultimate consequences. You are too well acquainted with the history of nations to be ignorant of this fact: *that no people ever retain'd their liberty and independance after admitting foreign mercenaries into their country to fight their battles for them under the pay and control of a foreign power.* Have those causes which in every preceeding age produced certain effects, lost their force in ours? I pray your reflection for a moment on this subject. Ought we for real injuries subject ourselves and our posterity to suffer still more grievous and lasting ones? What is Congress at this time but the dependants of France, and her tools for humbling her rival? Nothing more. They comply with whatever is dictated to them by that Court with greater submission than our Assemblies in former times complied with the requisition of the British minister. The Dutch, though at war with England, cloath their army with English cloth, and import and consume the goods of that country as formerly. English goods are continually imported and sold in France, but the French Minister at Philadelphia complains that in some instances Americans do the same; and forthwith comes out an *ordinance* from Congress forbidding all purchase and importation of British goods. I know not which is the most astonishing, the servility or the insolence of this conduct. It is to the last degree servile to submit to be dictated to in such a manner, and it is equally assuming and insolent to presume to dictate to the Continent in the stile of despotism itself. The Parliament of Great Britain, haughty as that nation is, never assume the stile of *ordinance* in their acts; but Congress have adopted



it, in imitation of their great ally and future master, who says *Nous Ordonnons*, and whose laws are stiled *les ordonnances du Roi*. Congress have really advanced rapidly from "Resolved, that it be recommended, &c.," to "We ordain, and be it ordained by Congress, &c." Is not the French army in America already stronger than our own? Does not France pay what little you receive in our army for your service? Is not Congress itself in the pay of France? Does not France pay every one of the Ministers and Agents of Congress in Europe? Is not the French army in America under the pay, as well as orders, of the King of France? If you cannot (as I know that you cannot) give the negative to any one of these queries, how absurd to talk of liberty and independance! The French, by the close of the war, will probably have an army of thirty thousand men and veterans in our country, if they succeed in their designs and reduce Great Britain to receive the law from them. We must inevitably, from that moment, feel the whole weight of French despotism, the little finger of which will be found is heavier than the loins of British tyranny. Look into the situation of the most favor'd of French subjects in France and in her colonies; examine, and then proceed, if you can, to risque every thing dear to us and our posterity on the word of an absolute monarch interested to dispense with or to explain it away. I make no apology for my freedom; the subject is too important to be trifled with, and I cannot too often, nor too urgently, repeat to you that nothing but an immediate peace can prevent our becoming unconditionally subject to one or the other of the two great rivals. If to France, we shall be mocked and deceived, perhaps, for a time, with the shadow and appearance of liberty and independance, whilst we suffer in reality all the effects of despotism; if to Great Britain, our case may not be much better. I do not think it can be worse. For me, I did not propose—I believe my countrymen never did—a

change of masters. A subject of the British Constitution knows no master but the laws for which he has given his voice in enacting; the invasion of their rights, to which as men and descendants from free British subjects we were entitled, first put arms into our hands; and the restoration and confirmation of those rights was the only real object of the war on our parts. If we can now obtain this, what remains which can justify us in the sight of God or man in continuing the war, in prolonging the miseries of our country, and in risking the final loss of every thing? I declare to you I see nothing equal to this, nor, indeed, any thing which, if obtained, would not, under our circumstance and disposition, prove a curse to us rather than an advantage.

I have been in this city about ten days. I have some valuable acquaintances here, and it is possible I may pass two or three months here and in the neighbourhood, for, to tell you the truth, I am sick of Paris, where every thing calls to my mind the present situation of my country and the still greater miseries which threaten it. I am not disgusted with men, but extremely so with measures, in France. I have been treated with a generosity and politeness in France which I shall ever gratefully remember; but no force of private gratitude can justify my silence when I see my country about to be sacrificed. If this letter arrive safe, I wish you to present my compliments to General Washington and General Parsons and my other friends in the army, and shew them this letter, if you judge proper to do it. When you write, inclose your letters to Mr. Grand, banker, at Paris, who will know my address wherever I may be.

I am, with, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Major Tallmadge.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO THOMAS MUMFORD.

Ghent, Oct. 20th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you so largely on politics in my letter of the 15th of June last that I have nothing to add on that subject. Your sentiments may differ from mine, but as I know that you act from principle, I shall not esteem you the less, nor can I expect that you will adopt the too general practice of our countrymen of branding every one who thinks differently from them on politics with the name of enemies, tories, &c. Since my writing that letter I have attentively observed the politics of this part of the world and the measures taken by France and Spain for prosecuting the war, and I have found nothing to contradict what I have already written to you and others of my friends in America.

The events of war are at all times uncertain; those of this campaign are now well known to be as trifling and indecisive in Europe as I ventured to predict that they would be. They may possibly be more decisive in America, but whatever may be the issue of the war, or whichever of the two great rivals succeed so as to reduce the other, it will not alter my opinion, which is, that unless we improve the present moment in making peace, we shall become unconditionally subject and dependant on the victorious party, and we and our posterity will vainly lament the violence and infatuation of the present times.

I wrote you on the 24th ulto. respecting your nephew, and since my being here I have written to Mr. De Neuville; not that I really wished to place him immediately, but that I might be able to give you information, and to judge myself if it should be left to me. Inclosed you have a copy of Mr. De Neuville's letter by which he offers to take him into his counting house, but his cloathing and board will be at your expence. This is of too much consequence in so dear a

place as Amsterdam for me to determine without your orders. Besides, except the single article of bookkeeping, your nephew is as well with Doctor Franklin and, indeed, better than he could be at Amsterdam. I shall, therefore, excuse myself to Mr. De Neuville for the present, and hold the place open for your nephew until next spring, by which time you can give your orders on the subject.

We have neither news nor politics in this country, except what is imported direct from London, and you will have that sooner through other channels than from me. I have been in this city about ten days, and may possibly pass the winter here and in the neighbourhood. I have several worthy acquaintance in this country, and the society, not so gay as at Paris, is more to my taste. It is probable that I shall make some commercial adventures from this country, but it must be in the small way, whilst Congress continue wickedly to evade any settlement with me, and to push off the payment of what they know to be my just due. I have finally taken the resolution to seize on their effects in Europe. I could not well do it in France, but they have goods in Holland, where the rights of individuals are respected; and I am determined to enter my process there. As this will make some noise in the world, I am preparing a state of my case, or, in other words, the history of the conduct of Congress towards me from the first, which I shall publish in different languages. I do not expect that this will obtain, what my best services have not, the thanks of Congress, but it will, at least, give me the pleasure of vindicating my character in the eyes of Europe and America; and if this is done at the expence of those who have injured me, it will be the more agreeable, after what I have suffered from them; but I will dismiss the subject lest I get warm, and memory push me to say what may be offensive to you; but I cannot avoid declaring that I view the present Congress as being at once the most tyrannical and weak Government of any

that I know of. Their weakness is, happily, an inseparable impediment to their tyranny; but let them once get thirty thousand French troops on the continent and at their command, and you will then feel all the weight of the despotism of France, at second hand, through them, who are already become the dependants and tools of the *Grand Monarque*. My respects to General Saltonstall and to all of the family, and my most affectionate love to sister Anny.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S.—Direct your letters, if to France, as usual, to care of Doctor Franklin; if to Holland, to care of Mr. De Neuville.

Thomas Mumford, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

#### THE INTERCEPTED LETTERS.

*New York, October 20th, 1781.* The Printer [James Rivington], ever ready to serve his King and Country; has the pleasure to inform such of his readers as wish well to both, of the Government's intercepting a number of letters in Europe, that were on their way from Paris to certain demagogues in America. Their dates are of May and June last; they disclose the real state of the rebel affairs on the other side of the water, with the ultimate designs of the Courts of Versailles and Madrid, and the helpless condition of the Dutch, &c., &c., &c. Melancholy truths are indeed extorted at last, worthy the views of people too long cheated by their confidants.

The public may be assured of having this rich repast spread before them by his Majesty's faithful Printer, in regular detail.

A great part of the budget consists of the confidential epistles of Silas Deane and Doctor Franklin, fellow negociators in the secret transactions of their

Congressional High Mightinesses, with their great and magnanimous Ally.

The reader may therefore promise himself a copious supply of curious information from this correspondence, especially when informed that the letters are lengthy, and among others, directed to that class which the rebels call their *Great Men*, viz. : Jesse Root, Benjamin Harrison, James Wilson, Robert Morris, Charles Thompson, Samuel H. Parsons, Benjamin Tallmadge, William Duer, Jeremiah Wadsworth, Simeon Deane, Barnabas Deane, and Thomas Mumford.

As that to Mr. Duer throws light upon the American Financier's late *Mystery of Iniquity*, respecting his instructions to Mr. Jay to protest the bills of the Congress's own drawing, it shall have the first place in this paper, and appear next Wednesday.

*The Royal Gazette, No. 528, Saturday, Oct. 20, 1781.*

The letters are printed in this volume under the date at which they were written. They appeared in Rivington's paper in the following order :

To William Duer,	June 14,	in Royal Gazette of Oct. 24,	1781.
" Robert Morris,	" 10,	" " " " 27,	"
" Jeremiah Wadsworth,	" 13,	" " " " 31,	"
" Samuel H. Parsons,	May 14,	" " " " Nov. 3,	"
" Charles Thomson,	June 1,	" " " " 7,	"
" Simeon Deane,	May 16,	" " " " 10,	"
" Thomas Mumford,	June 15,	" " " " 14,	"
" James Wilson,	May 10,	" " " " 21,	"
" Benjamin Harrison,	June 15,	" " " " 21,	"
" Jesse Root,	May 20,	" " " " 24,	"
" Benjamin Tallmadge,	" " " "	" " " " 28,	"
		" " " " Dec. 1,	"
		" " " " 12,	"

With these letters was an essay credited to Deane, entitled "The American Account Current, with its Vouchers," which appeared in the Royal Gazette, Dec. 22 and 29, 1781.

In order to give a wider circulation to the letters, Rivington caused the newspaper type to be put in

small pages, omitting the letters to Mumford and Harrison of June 15, and issued a small pocket volume, which was announced in the Royal Gazette of March 2, 1782, as follows :

This Day are published in one Octavo Pocket Volume, containing Two Hundred and Nine Pages, with large additions, and now first collected from the many Royal Gazettes in which they made their first public appearance. Price Six Shillings Currency.

PARIS PAPERS ;

Or, Mr. Silas Deane's late intercepted Letters to his Brothers, and other intimate Friends in America. To which are annexed for Comparison, the Congressional Declaration of Independency in July, 1776, and that now inculcating among the revolted Provinces, with the *never-to-be-forgotten* Orders of the Rebel General in August, 1776, for preventing a Pacification.

The following extract from the correspondence of King George III. with Lord North, edited by W. B. Donne, London, 1867, explains the publication of the letters of Deane :

Queen's House, March 3d, 1781.

LORD NORTH,—On returning last night from the oratorio I received your box. I think it perfectly right that Mr. Deane should so far be trusted as to have three thousand pounds in goods for America ; the giving him particular instructions would be liable to much hazard, but his bringing any of the provinces to offer to return to their allegiance on the former foot would be much better than by joint application through the Congress ; for if, by the breaking off of some, the rest are obliged to yield, no farther concert or, perhaps, amity, can subsist between them, which would not be the case in the other mode, and the fire might only be smothered, to break out again on the first occasion.

Kew, July 19th, 1781.

I HAVE received Lord North's boxes containing the intercepted letters from Mr. Deane for America. I have only been able to read two of [them], on which I form the same opinion of too much appearance of being concerted with this country, and therefore not likely to have the effect as if they bore another aspect. I return them, and hope when the copies have been taken to be able to read them at my leisure, for it is impossible in an hurry to form any solid opinion concerning them. The extract from Franklin is very material; should France not supply America amply, I think it has the appearance that this long contest will end as it ought, by the colonies returning to the mother country; and I confess I will never put my hand to any other conclusion of this business.

II. 380.

Windsor, August 7th, 1781.

THE letter Lord North has wrote to Sir Henry Clinton on the subject of the intercepted letters from Mr. Deane he is transmitting to him is very proper, and is the most likely means of rendering them of some utility. I owne I think them too strong in our favour to bear the appearance of his spontaneous opinions, but that, if supposed to be authentick, they will see they have by concert fallen into our hands. The means Mr. Deane should have taken as most conducive of the object he seems now to favour, would have been first to have shewn that the hands of France are too full to be able to give any solid assistance to America, and to have pointed out the ruin that must attend a further continuance of the war; and after having given time for these opinions to be digested, then have proposed the giving up all ideas of independency, and have shewn that the country is not in a state to subsist without the assistance of some foreign Power, and that consequently so mild a government as the British one is the most favourable that America can depend upon.

II. 381.



Windsor, Oct. 23d, 1781.

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I QUITE agree [with Lord North] that the retreat of Mr. D[eane] to Ghent shews his conduct is sincere.

II. 384.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—There is no convincing evidence that Deane was in the pay of the English government, or that he had been promised pay, when he wrote the "Intercepted Letters" published by Rivington. The correspondence given by Donne shows that he was considered a person who might be corruptly influenced, yet these communications of the king to North, even in connection with the "Intercepted Letters," do not suffice to prove that Deane was bribed. With his return to Paris, his despondency over his own affairs and the condition of America became so acute, that Franklin compared his conversation to raving. His views were constantly advanced without the slightest restraint, and convinced the English agents that he could readily be made of conscious utility to the English interest. That a proposition to buy him was considered and approved by the king, appears in the note dated March 3d, 1781. It is possible that someone of the English agents, perhaps Wentworth, suggested to him a commercial partnership, promising to furnish the goods or money, but without intimation of a bribe. At least Deane's hopes of thus retrieving his fortunes were considerably revived. In the meantime, his letters were abstracted from their covers, before leaving France, a fate they shared with very many important foreign documents then wanted by North and his colleagues. In the course of four months the King took the opportunity of criticising this selection, on the ground that it over-shot the mark. The tenor of the letters, however, did not vary from that of others preceding them, a circumstance of which the King doubtless was unaware.

In August they were sent by the fleet to New York, with orders to print and circulate. Deane required no bribe to set forth the most despairing opinions on the course of the war. The letters contained his convictions and his manias. He subsequently defended his position by further argument. It is extraordinary that when he learned of the publication he wrote to Bancroft in terms of regret and apology, and, especially, in complete ignorance that his friend was in the pay of the English government. Had Deane in reality been traitorous, Bancroft was the most natural channel of communication with him, and could best have arranged all details. The hope of the proposed business venture quickly faded away. Evidently the English ministry, on receipt of the despatches announcing the surrender of Cornwallis, did not care to approach Deane, considering that all worth having had been unwittingly furnished by him; and as early as October there is an allusion by the King to Deane's "sincerity" that ought to be interpreted in favor of his integrity. His circumstances, far from improving in consequence of these letters, rapidly became worse. He was ruined at home and abroad. He soon began to lack the necessities of life. He died in extreme poverty, and he never appears to have criminated himself as a bribe-taker in his confidences to his relatives or intimates. This is the case as far as at present revealed.

CHARLES ISHAM.

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TO BARNABAS DEANE.

Ghent, Oct. 21st, 1781.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I received yours of the 10th of July a few days since at this place. You say you have received no letters from me since one of December last. I have written more than ten to you since that time, from which I am convinced that there must have

been foul play on your side of the water. I wrote you a long political letter of the 10th of May last. I fear that it has been intercepted. If it has been, you will undoubtedly see it, with several others sent by the same conveyance, published in New York. Disagreeable as this circumstance must be to me, I shall not be sorry to have all America informed of my sentiments, and the grounds on which they are founded. I have seen nothing since to alter my way of thinking, but, on the contrary, much to confirm me in it.

The present campaign in Europe is now finished on the part of France and Spain, whose combined fleet have spent the season in joining, in cruising a few weeks at the mouth of the channel, without taking a single vessel or preventing any operation of England, and then in quarrelling, cursing each other heartily, and parting, one for Brest, the other for Cadiz. The approaching equinox was made the pretext, but the real cause was in their misunderstanding between themselves and their fears of Admiral Darby's fleet, which at the time of their separation was augmented to 35 sail of the line, ten of them 3-deckers and ready to put to sea ; for I do not believe that either the French or Spanish admiral, though their united force consisted of 49 sail of the line, wished to engage the enemy. Admiral Darby is now at sea, off the coast of Spain, with design to intercept the Spanish flota from Havannah. Should he succeed, a general bankruptcy will ensue in Spain, and the consequences will be felt very sensibly in other parts of Europe. It is impossible for me to know at this distance what your prospects may be as to any thing decisive in America ; but nothing in the ordinary course of causes and effects can alter my opinion, which is, that unless we improve the present moment to make peace, we must become eventually subject to, and dependant on, the victorious party ; and though I have a thousand reasons to love and esteem the French in general, as an individual I must regard our dependence on France as the heaviest curse

that can fall on our country ; and it is with indignation too great for words to express that I see our Congress already become the tools and servile dependants of foreign despotism, whilst they boast of liberty and independence. But the absurdities of that body have been so frequent and so great that they cause no surprize at present in Europe. You build, I see, great hopes on a Congress at Vienna ; but you ought by this time to know that no such Congress has ever existed, nor, in all probability, ever will ; but under the conditions stipulated by England and assented to by the Emperor, that the deputies or ministers of America should have nothing to do in it, but that the affairs of America should be wholly out of the question in a treaty for general peace. I wish to God I could write to you in a different stile, but as an honest man and the friend of my country I cannot. You ought to know the truth, and the sooner the better. America has been too long led on and encouraged by false information from this side the water. It is high time the curtain should be drawn up and that the actors behind the scenes should be stripped of all disguise and false appearance, and that the catastrophe of the piece should be placed in the full view of every one. I have attempted to do this. I expect to be abused for it, and am sure that I shall not be disappointed ; for I have written a long letter to Mr. Root expressly with the design of having the same read in Congress and in our Assembly. Should that letter have been intercepted by the enemy, my sentiments will become more generally known than I wish for ; but in one word be assured that we shall, unless we make peace immediately, become eventually dependant, and that unconditionally, either on France or England.

I have been in this city about ten days, and it is probable that I shall spend two or three months here or in the neighborhood. I have a good acquaintance here, and the society is agreeable. Direct your letters as formerly. They will find me where ever I may rest

myself during my exile, to which the unparalleled ingratitude and injustice of Congress have doomed me. I have stated my accounts with the vouchers, from which it appears incontestably that that body are in my debt more than 340,000 livres; yet such have been their arts that they have eluded all settlement, in order to avoid, under one pretext or other, payment. I have at last taken the resolution of attaching their effects in Holland. I could not do it in France, under that absolute government; but I trust that I shall find in Holland more respect for the rights and property of individuals. I am sensible that this procedure will make some noise. I therefore have determined to publish the whole of the proceedings of Congress with respect to me and my negotiations on their behalf, whatever be the consequences. I owe this to my character, attacked and sacrificed by those whom I have served and saved, but who, in the end, have eventually ruined themselves and their country. I will not add on the subject, as I find that reflection on past events warms me, and may force from me expressions which in cooler moments I should read with regret. In a word, if you are satisfied with the government of Congress and with the course in which the affairs of America are in, you will continue to support them, as it is your duty to do in such a case; and, on the contrary, if you think with me, you ought to urge for peace and reconciliation; but if the general voice of our countrymen is against it, prudence will dictate silence, and to wait patiently the event.

I am as undetermined as ever as to any thing of business; but if I remain here any time I shall attempt something, but more probably for the West Indies than for North America; but I will write you again by the first opportunity. I now promise to say no more to you on the subject of politics, and, therefore, shall be at liberty to say the more on private subjects.

My most affectionate love to our sister Buck, my

compliments to all friends, particularly to Col. George Wylls, to whom you may shew this letter if you judge proper.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

B. Deane, Esqr.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JONATHAN TRUMBULL.

Ghent, October 21st, 1781.

SIR,—The critical situation of our public affairs forces me to address you, and, through you, my fellow-citizens of Connecticut. Though persecuted and in effect exiled by Congress, I cannot be indifferent to the fate of my country. The views of France become every day more evident, and they are no other than to humble Great Britain at our expence. Spain whilst at war with England wishes to save appearances, and to employ the forces of her enemy on our continent. But she has not, nor will, under any circumstances, acknowledge our independency of all the nations in Europe. Spain is most interested to prevent our becoming independent of any European control. Remembrance of past injuries, and the desire of revenge, have armed that nation against England, and whilst we employ more than one half of the British force, she hopes to regain the territory lost in former wars, and to see us reduced so low, that whether in the end we become dependent on France or England she will have nothing to fear from us for ages to come. There does not appear any disposition in any of the powers of Europe to follow the example of France and to acknowledge our independence. The league against England is indeed a formidable one, but history furnishes us with many instances of leagues equally powerful against a single state, but with no one in which they have finally succeeded. This merits our attention. Nothing can be more absurd than to imagine that the powers in Europe should encourage

from other than interested motives a revolt from a government infinitely milder than their own, or that absolute monarchs should cordially approve of the doctrine of the natural equality of man.

The campaign in Europe is nearly finished on the part of France and Spain, and has been as ridiculously trifling and indecisive as the preceding ones. The English fleet is at sea. Its object is to intercept the Spanish flota or to relieve Minorca. If it succeed in the first, of which there is but too much probability, the effect will be sensibly felt in Spain. The other is of less importance. But however the war may terminate, we shall find ourselves at the close of it loaded with debt, and absolutely dependent on the victorious party, if the course of nature is not changed; but if similar causes continue to produce similar effects, no nation was ever in a more dangerous situation than what America is in at this time. Happy for us (if we are wise) it is still in our power to avoid the danger and to establish the peace, liberty, and safety of our country on the most sure and solid basis.

That we must, by continuing the war and rejecting all overtures of peace and reconciliation with Great Britain, become unconditionally dependent on France or Great Britain, is a truth as demonstrable as any proposition whatever. If Great Britain becomes so reduced as to receive the law from France and Spain, though it will be at our expence that this is done, yet they will claim the whole merit and all the advantages resulting from it. The power of Great Britain reduced, there will be none remaining in Europe to hold the ballance against the House of Bourbon; and France able to dictate the law to Great Britain can do the same to us, and in a more imperious manner, and with more safety. France, in good policy, will manage her conduct towards Great Britain, in such circumstances, so as not to offend and alarm the rest of Europe, but she can be influenced by no such motives in her conduct to us. We shall be deeply in debt to her for

money actually borrowed and supplies of different kinds, and France will charge the whole expence of the war to our account, and make demands, if not on our purses, on our gratitude therefor. France has an army in our country at her pay, and at her orders ; she is calculating to encrease that army to twenty or even to thirty thousand men. If the history of different nations afford us one instance in which a people preserved their liberty and independence after admitting a superior army of foreign mercenaries into their country to fight their battles, at the pay and devotion of a foreign monarch, we ought to have some small ground to hope that what has happened might happen again. But the history of the world produces no such instance, nor is it possible it ever should so long as men and their passions continue to be the same that they ever have been. We have a treaty, it is true, which guarantees our liberty and independence, but with whom is that treaty ? With the very power that will be interested to break it, or to explain it away. No man acquainted with the past and present transactions in Europe, can be weak enough to presume that any power will ever regard a treaty longer than it is for their real or supposed interest to do so. It is at all times in the power of the King of France to make and dissolve treaties, with this difference from limited monarchs, that he is not accountable for his conduct. I have, therefore, not gone too far in asserting that if France and Spain come off victorious, that we shall be absolutely dependent on one or both of them. If England, on the other hand, continues to make head against all her enemies, and by some fortunate event of war, or by the interposition of foreign powers, which is the most probable, forces France and Spain to a peace on her own terms, we must become unconditionally dependent on and subject to England. The present moment, therefore, is of infinite importance to us. We are now of great consequence in a treaty of general peace. We shall be of none at all, or, at best,



a mere article to be set off or discounted in the balancing the general account. At present we may obtain the repeal of all the acts of Parliament obnoxious to us, a perpetual exemption from all taxes, save what we impose on ourselves, freedom of legislation and of commerce. What more shall we gain by independence? Will the name of Sovereign Independent States counter ballance the misery and distress of our country at the present, and the future burdens to which it must be subjected? This is a serious question, and I put it to a serious and thinking people. I am confident that there is not in the world a more free and uncorrupted Assembly than that of Connecticut; none more attentive to the freedom, ease, and happiness of the people they represent, and to their true interests in every respect. Can such an Assembly, on serious reflection, consent to load themselves and their constituents with taxes nearly equal to the whole of their income? The amount of our share of the public debt will not fall short of two millions sterling, if the war is continued another year. The interest of this, the expences of general government, that is, of Congress, of their ministers, agents, and consuls in foreign parts, of their ministers and boards at home, of a fleet essentially necessary to the existence of our commerce, and the half pay of our officers and soldiers, will amount to nearly three shilling in the pound perpetual tax. Our ministers in Europe cost us at this time more than twenty thousand pounds sterling annually, though we have only one received and acknowledged as such. The secretaries of these inefficient, unacknowledged ministers receive one thousand sterling annually, which is a perfect sinecure; for whilst their principals cannot act, they most certainly can have nothing to copy or to record. From this sample, and from Congress having uniformly disposed of these places among themselves, we may make some estimate of our future civil list, and it will not be too hardy to say that it will, if this system is pursued, be as great a source of

corruption, and as burdensome, as the civil lists in England or the pensions of France.

The Parliament is summoned on business the 27th of the next month. It is generally believed that a secret treaty has some months since been signed between Russia and England, and that it will be announced at the opening of the next session. However that may be, there is certainly a good understanding between the two powers, and it appears probable that in the coming winter both the Emperor of Germany and the Empress of Russia will interpose their mediation in more direct and positive terms than in the last. By the appointment of delegates by Congress to attend the Congress at Vienna, I see that the hopes of my countrymen were sanguine on that subject. They ought to be undeceived on that as well as many others. The Emperor offered and England accepted the mediation on the express condition that the affairs of America should not be subjected to any determination of the proposed Congress. This not being assented to by France, the affair fell to the ground. It will be probably revived this winter. The great object of England this winter will be to make a general peace, or a separate one with Holland, and to get that war off their hands. If they succeed in either, the consequence will be much the same to us, if we neglect the present favorable and important moment.

I am not disgusted with men, though I am extremely so with measures, in France, and I have written to you not with confidence that my sentiments will be adopted, but from the impulse of duty, and that this letter may, by its being made a public one, remain on your public files to condemn or justify me on some future day. If my opinions are ill founded, still my intention is good ; but, if events justify my predictions, this letter will justify me in the eyes of posterity for having given the alarm in season, whether it shall be attended to or not.

I have sent on my accounts to Congress, by which it will appear that there is a ballance due to me of more than three hundred thousand livres tournois. They have by design or inattention prevented my having my accounts audited or payed. From the general tenor of their conduct towards me, I am authorized to put the most unfavorable construction on it; but I will not enter on the disagreeable subject further than to appeal to justice and humanity of my countrymen to prevent the final ruin of one who has faithfully served them, and who now hazards the loss of every thing in venturing to undeceive them. I shall probably pass the winter in this place or in the neighbourhood. Commercial objects, as well as oeconomy, urge me to it. This will go by Capt. Trowbridge of New Haven. I shall improve every direct opportunity to write to you. I have the honor to be, with respect,

Your Excellency's most obedient & very humble servant,

SILAS DEANE.

To Governor Trumbull.

*Jay Mss., New York Historical Society.*

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TO SAMUEL H. PARSONS.

Ghent, Oct. 21st, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—My letter of the 14th of June last contained my sentiments on our political situation. No event since that time has happened to change them. On the contrary, every thing has tended to confirm me in them. I have written by this conveyance to Gov. Trumbull, which letter will be communicated to our General Assembly; and I have directed our mutual friend Major Tallmadge to shew you mine to him. I

can hardly say any thing on the subject in this without repeating what I have already said in those and in my last letter to you.

I am now in a city perfectly neutral, and perfectly indifferent as to the fate of the contending powers. The people are satisfied with their government; they idolize their Emperor, and flatter themselves that his mediation, however the war may turn, will in the end be courted, and that the price of it will be an extension of the commercial privileges of this country, at present extremely cramped by former treaties; but they wish him to take no other part in the contest. You know that this country was for several centuries the center of almost all the commerce and wealth of Europe. It still remains one of the best cultivated and most populous of any I have ever seen. This city, Antwerp, Bruges, and others retain visible marks of their ancient riches. The people, settled on the most fertile soil I ever saw, and naturally economical and industrious, continue to be in easy circumstances, though they have been deprived of their commerce for more than a century. All their canals, quays, and magazines have been kept in repair; and their situation for commerce is so much superior to that of Holland that, were the restrictions I refer to taken off, it would in a very few years rival and probably ruin that republic. The misfortune of this country, as well as that of Holland, is to have very few good ports, the whole country being nearly on a level with the sea; the shoals and sand and mud banks run far off the coast. Antwerp is situated on the river Scheldt, which at that city becomes a large and noble river with eighteen feet of tide in it. But the Dutch territories lie on each side the river, just below the town, and the House of Austria sacrificed the right of the navigation on it to the sea in former treaties. Ostend is the only other port of any consequence, and has lately been made free by the Emperor, since which it has increased rapidly. But by treaties with England and Holland, all commerce between Ostend or other

Austrian ports in the Netherlands and the East Indies is prohibited ; and the Emperor, in rendering Ostend a free port, could not take off those restrictions, and he is still obliged to carry on his commerce with the East Indies from Trieste, which lays it under very great disadvantages. I am thus particular on this subject, as being well understood it may serve as a key to explain the Emperor's conduct. Commercial advantages for this part of his dominions are the only objects that can rationally interest him in the present contest. These are to be obtained by concessions on the part of England and Holland ; and as these may probably be as easily and as effectually obtained and secured by a spirited and decisive tone of mediation on his part as by war, he will probably prefer the former. The coming winter will inform us fully on this subject. This country produces no article for our consumption or commerce, except linens, which are neither preferable in quality nor cheaper than those of Ireland. This country, which formerly supplied England itself and all Europe with woolens, now imports large quantities of woolens from thence for their consumption ; in a word, the Flammand, when deprived of their navigation by which only such bulky goods as woolens could be carried to foreign markets, wisely turned their attention to finer manufactures, such as lace, cambrics, &c. ; and, their country being extremely proper for the cultivation of flax, they did not suffer so materially by the change ; and though their manufactures make less show and appearance, yet they bring a certain ballance into the country. A pound of flax, before it goes out of the manufacturer's hands in the finest of lace, becomes equally valuable with a pound of gold, and often more so. Our country has none, or very little, market for such articles, and this country is not in want of any of our productions. It raises more tobacco than it consumes, and already exports large quantities of that article. The East and West India productions are almost the only ones wanted from abroad. By this

general sketch, you will be able to form a judgment how far the Emperor is interested in the present contest, and what part he will most probably take, and whither he will take any at all with respect to us.

It would be folly in me to attempt to send you news from a place like this ; all we have comes from London or Paris or Amsterdam, and you will have that earlier through the public channels. The disposition of the different neutral powers in Europe appears the same as I have described them in my former letters. The surprise which our first exertions against the whole force of England caused, and the consequent attention given to us and our cause, have almost entirely ceased, and the administration of Congress has been such that they have lost that respect in which they were once held on this side the water. Sensible men see nothing in their constitution and government that is fixed, permanent, and decisive. After the repeal of the obnoxious acts and the offers made by Parliament, the first great object appears to be out of the question ; and it is not easy to convince a disinterested European that democratic independancy is preferable to the British constitution and form of government. I will dismiss this subject, as it may be disagreeable to you. I wrote you in my last on the old subject of the Illinois or Western Lands. If you are disposed to do any thing that way, I hope you have already wrote me, that some plan may be digested and pursued immediately on a peace, which, I pray God, may not be very distant.

I have sent on my accounts to Congress, by which they will see that they are more than 300,000 livres in my debt. I cannot imagine that the more sensible part of them ever imagined otherways, notwithstanding their pretences. I am extreemly impatient to hear from you, and hope you will gratify me. If we differ on political subjects, we can discuss them cooly or pass them over in silence in our correspondence, without interrupting that friendship which has so long subsisted

between us, and which I sincerely wish may be perpetuated with our existence. I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c., S. DEANE.

Direct your letters to care of Mr. Grand, banker, at Paris, who will know my address in all my wanderings.

General Parsons, Conn.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN DE NEUVILLE AND SONS.

Ghent, Oct. 23d, 1781.

GENTLEMEN,—I received your esteemed favor of the 18th, and as soon as I receive advice from Paris shall write you further on the subject of my young friend whom you have generously offer'd a place in your counting house. The present serves only to cover my letters to Governor Trumbull and Mr. Mumford, which you will be so kind to forward, with orders to have them destroyed in case of accident. I shall with great pleasure embrace any opportunity of rendering you equal service, and have the honor to be, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Messrs. De Neuville.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC HAZLEHURST.

Ghent, Oct. 24th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I duly received your favor of the 18th inst., and now take the liberty of enclosing to your care a letter for General Parsons, which pray you to deliver to Capt. Trowbridge with my request to destroy it in case of accident. I wrote to him, but have not been favored with any answer. You must have seen the Court Gazette from London, by which it appears that Admiral Graves has had the worst of it, and that our friends were masters of the Chesapeake; on the other

hand, Commander Johnston has given our friends in Holland a blow by the capture of five of their East Indiamen. God grant that something more decisive may happen which may bring us peace! We have now two mails due from London, and therefore have no news except that the Queen of France is delivered of a son, a young Dauphin (as report says, and probably true). The arrival of a new master will cause great rejoicings, and be the subject of conversation and entertainment at Paris. Of what consequence is the fate of the war in comparison with this?

I am most sincerely yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Hazlehurst.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Ghent, Oct. 24th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received your favor of no date, acknowledging the receipt of my letters of the 11th and 12th. I have written you one letter since. I am not surprized at Gillon's conduct, nor do I envy his passengers their situation. I expect to hear that Gillon has sold vessel and cargo and gone off with the effects; however it may be, we are doomed on all these occasions to suffer not only the loss of property but in our national character. I wish you to pay some attention to Major Franks; he is of a communicative turn, and the real situation of our country may be known through such channels with greater certainty than through different ones. I congratulate you and my friends on the birth of a Dauphin. I can learn nothing of the articles which my hostess says are missing; it is something singular that two pair of tongs should be taken out of my apartments; they are not generally objects for plunder, and you know that my servants were reputed honest. I have received no letters since my last to you, and of course have nothing new to send you; nor would



I write at all but to set you the example of answering punctually the letters that pass between us. Two mails are still due; I shall see them probably tomorrow, and if any thing new arrives will write you. Please to send on the inclosed, and be assured that I am, most sincerely,

Yours, &c.,  
S. DEANE.

Doctor Bancroft.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO ISAAC HAZLEHURST.

Ghent, Oct. 26th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—You will undoubtedly be desirous of knowing the history of Gillon and his passengers. After cruising about four weeks in the North Seas, and then going north about and cruising at the west of the Channel for some time, he put into Corunna. He confined Jackson, Searle, and his other passengers whilst he went on shore to negotiate a number of bills under the acceptance of Doctor Franklin, which he had obtained of Jackson, the latter says fraudlently. Jackson, however, contrived to let his situation be known to a French frigate in the road, by whom he got liberated, and on shore in time to prevent the negociation. Jackson, Searle, and the rest give Gillon a most horrid character. Gillon, on his part, recriminates, and says that they impeded all his operations in such a manner that he is confident they cannot be friends to America, and that, in short, he is obliged to sell the goods shipped for South Carolina to raise money; he says that Mr. Searle persuaded him at Amsterdam to take on board two thousand pounds sterling of goods on his, Mr. Searle's, account (surely there could have been no British manufactures among them), and that Mr. Searle is angry with him on account of his not going directly to America on that account. This, in a few words, is the history

as I received it yesterday from Paris. I do not pretend to vouch for the truth of every part of it, nor if it is true to say which party is in the right ; but this much may be depended on, that Gillon is at Corunna, and that he and his passengers are quarrelling. Major Franks, the quondam aide of Arnold, came over to Spain with dispatches from Congress, and thence to Paris. I hear of nothing new by him. The Ariel frigate is also arrived ; she left Rhode Island the 28th of August, so that she can bring nothing later than you have in the English Gazette. The winds have been contrary, and we have two mails due from England ; have, therefore, nothing from that quarter.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

I pray you not to mention from whom you receive this intelligence, as some people may think me not sorry for what has happened.

Mr. Hazlehurst.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN CHARLES DE BAY.

Ghent, 28th Octo., 1781.

SIR,—Please to send me a bill on Mr. Catres for one thousand florins, and charge the same to my account. Mr. Catres informs me that it will be agreeable to him. I shall in a few days do myself the honor of writing to you on the subject of the ballance in your hands, and if agreeable to you to remit the whole to me in the same way, please to inform me, as I shall probably have use for it here.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. J. Charles de Bay.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO P. WRAY.

Ghent, Oct. 29th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you a few days since, and this day received yours of the 23d. You will oblige me in forwarding the books as early as possible. I have anticipated the request of our friends, and have sent on what they desired. I have seen no English papers since the 18th, though I have inquired every where after them. You must, I presume, by this have heard of Admiral Digby's arrival, and be able to form some opinion, with probability at least, whither his junction with Admiral Graves will or will not be decisive. I am impatient to hear further of the operations in America. I have received but one letter from Paris since my leaving it, and nothing material. I hope you are not discouraged as to our adventure to America. If you are, it will greatly disappoint me. But I must at all events proceed. I pray your answer by the first post.

I am, &c., &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. Wray, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Ghent, Oct. 29th, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,—My last was of the 25th, since which date I have received none of yours. I am impatient to know if Mr. Barclay is arrived at Paris, and what are his powers as to settling of the Congress accounts ; also if Mr. Williamson I mentioned in my last has been at Paris lately. He is now here, but I have not seen him ; but he appears to be on some extraordinary scheme, from what I have heard of him. I have changed my lodgings ; direct, therefore, either to Mr. Catres or to me, chez Mōnsr. Beacrestkins, Maitre

Tapissier, dans le Rue de Valstrait. We have nothing from London.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Doctor Bancroft.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO HENRY GRAND.

Ghent, Oct. 29th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received the letter your father did me the honor to write me, inclosing your account. I have no doubt but it is right, but have not had time to examine it. I sent two days since a bill on you for ten louis d'orrs payable to bearer. I sent it to a friend in the Rue de Maille, and I shall remit you in the course of a few days, if I do not return myself with it, the amount of your ballance. I have recovered part of an old arrearage, and hope to obtain the rest soon, which detains me, for hearing that a Consul is arrived from Congress, I hope he has orders to settle my accounts, which makes me impatient to return. I have written to you, as you understand English, and on account of the little bill I have mentioned. My most respectful compliments, &c.

I remain, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Henry Grand.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JONATHAN NESBITT.

Ghent, Oct. 30th, 1781.

SIR,—Just before I left Virginia, Mr. Shee, on the advice of our mutual friend Mr. Morris, sent to my care the copies of a number of Certificates from the Loan Office, with instructions to sell them at a limited price; or, if they were in better demand at L'Orient than at Paris, to send them to you. On my arrival at Paris they were at no price, and you will remember my

writing to you in August, 1780, from Nantes, and your letter to me on the subject, after the receipt of which I despaired of disposing of them, and wrote to Mr. Shee sometime last summer, for I have not the letter at hand. I received a letter from Mr. Shee directing me to deposit the Certificate copies with Doctor Franklin, with a certificate of my not having disposed of them. In compliance with his orders, I sealed them up in presence of Doctor Franklin, and deposited them with him, of which I notified Mr. Shee by letter. Since my arrival here I have received a letter, or rather memo., which Mr. Shee gave to Major Franks open, complaining of my neglect, and praying me to send him certificates of the copies under the hand and seal of the Minister, though I have already been at some trouble and expence on the subject. I would go through with it if I were at Paris, but as it may be some time before I may be there, I give you the earliest notice of their being lodged, agreeable to his directions, with the Minister, and at his disposal. As I am told that you have orders from him on the subject, I presume that you will be able to answer his request, and be satisfied that I have not neglected his orders.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Jonathan Nesbitt.

The letter from Nantes was in August, 1780.

*Thomas Mss.*

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ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO JOHN JAY.

Philadelphia, Nov. 1st, 1781.

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As I know the confidence you once had in Deane, I must caution you against any communication with him; some letters have been furnished by Rivington, said to

be his, which, being compared with others received here, have the marks of authenticity.

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*Diplomatic Correspondence, Amer. Rev., Wharton Ed., IV., 316.*

THOMAS PAINE TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Second Street, fryday Evening.

[Nov. 2d, 1781.]

SIR,—The letters of Mr. S. Deane's having appeared in the N. Y. papers, which are variously commented upon, I should like to converse a quarter of an hour with you on that subject. I hope this man's knack of creating confusion and involving characters in suspicion is at an end. Whether the letters be genuine or not I do not undertake to give judgement upon, but his language in France is equally as strange as anything contained in these publications.

I am, Sir, your obdt. Hble. Servt.,

THOMAS PAINE.

Honble R. Morris, Esquire.

*Reed Papers, N. Y. Historical Society.*

FROM JEREMIAH WADSWORTH.

Williamsburg, Nov. —, 1781.

SIR,—Your letter of the 13th June came to me two days since, in Mr. Rivington's paper. The picture you have given of American affairs is indeed a gloomy one; but events which have taken place since the date of it evince that you were mistaken in facts, and clearly prove it not to be a just one.

France has so effectually assisted America that Lord Cornwallis and his army are our prisoners. It does not appear to any body with whom I have conversed, even your most sanguine friends, nor do I believe, that Spain is actuated by the motives you ascribe to her; nor can I believe that she will consider her American colonies in greater danger from America independent than from America united with Great Britain. If "the

European connections and alliances of Spain" will so overawe Great Britain united with America as to prevent her attacking the colonies of Spain, the same "connections and alliances" will certainly as much overawe us when alone. Nor is it possible to believe that America could make war on Spain and seize her American settlements without disturbing the peace of Europe. The family connections of France and Spain would induce the former to join the latter against us; and if those two nations had any other friends in Europe, they would, if necessary, take part against us. Great Britain would not be slow to embrace such an opportunity to wreak her vengeance on us for their loss; and, perhaps, might be flattered with a hope to regain us by conquest. We have nothing to hope, but every thing to fear, from making war on Spain.

To have driven the British troops from the United States the last campaign had been possible if the fleets and armies of France and Spain had been employed for that purpose only. This would have produced present peace, or made the war very little felt in America. The war continuing in Europe, and America not immediately affected, it is probable she would not have contributed much to carrying it on. France and Spain would have been left to cope with Great Britain (in your opinion already superior to both) without America.

You seem to have supposed that France and Spain should have entered into the war from no motives but to obtain justice for America. I had never such an idea. Nations have other motives for making war than relieving the distressed; and when France and Spain engaged in the British war, they intended to humble a haughty, insolent, and envious neighbour. To do this effectually, they will, if wise, continue the war, so as to keep America interested in every event to its close. This is dictated by sound policy, and is strictly just. I have no fear of our quarreling with the American Spaniards, from our different manners, customs, etc. People in Europe whose manners and customs are as

different as ours and the Spaniards, not even *separated by a river* or mountain, have long lived peaceably.

I have neither time, inclination, nor political knowledge enough to reply to all your assertions. They appear to me to be founded on false information, despondency, and mistakes. Your old enemies pronounce you an apostate, and boldly assert you are paid by Great Britain, and are sure before this you are in England. Your friends, whose distress is extreme from your letters, hope that the "cold hand of despair" which was on you caused you to see every thing with a jaundiced eye, and that you are still in France, and will risk the displeasure of that Court. However heavy it may fall, they consider it infinitely to be preferred to joining with Great Britain.

The American army was well supplied with provisions by the several states the last campaign, without spending a shilling of the money brought over by Mr. Laurens. All the states, especially the northern ones, have acquired a degree of method in their government which is increasing daily; and their finances are becoming daily more regular, and their funds more permanent. From the northern frontiers to Georgia the American arms have been successful. The army on Hudson's river, under General Heath, has kept the enemy close in New York, and furnished detachments sufficient to protect the state of New York from insult and ravage from the enemy. These are facts of which I have incontestable evidence, and must convince you how greatly you are mistaken in your opinions. But before this reaches you, I will hope you have recovered your spirits, and have obtained a better knowledge of our affairs; and, seeing things as they really are, you have retracted your mistaken opinions, and evinced to the world your attachment and friendship to America, as well as to, Sir,

Your humble servant,

J. WADSWORTH.

Silas Deane, Esq.

*Jay Mss., New York Historical Society.*



TO GURDON S. MUMFORD.

Ghent, Nov. 8th, 1781.

DEAR MUMFORD,—I have, since my being here, wrote to Messrs. De Neuville of Amsterdam, who have offered to take you into their house whenever you please; but as board, washing, &c., must be at your expence, and as it is a dear city, I have not given a direct answer, but have wrote your uncle by a vessel from Amsterdam, to have his final orders on the subject. In this I have acted my own judgment for the present, as I think you are not losing your time where you are, and that something may possibly happen between this and next spring which may alter your uncle's opinion. But as Messrs. Neuville's offer has been made in a very polite manner, and out of friendship to your uncle, you must write me a letter declaring your choice of remaining where you are this winter (if it is your choice), and of your thankful acceptance of their offer for next spring. This letter, if wrote immediately on the receipt of this, will find me here, and as I design to go to Amsterdam before my return I can shew it to them. Pray go to Doctor Bancroft and ask him if he has received five letters from me, and if he has answered them; if he has not, pray him to do it, and offer to carry the letters yourself to the post, and in your answer to this let me know what he says. My compliments to Doctor Franklin and son, and be assured of my sincere friendship.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Gurdon Mumford.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Ghent, Nov. 8th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—This is my fifth letter, and I have only one of yours, without date, which, after what has passed, is absolutely intolerable; at least tell me if you have

sent on the articles, when they were sent, and by what rout I may expect them. I am exceedingly hurt to find that neither the intreaties and expostulation of your friends nor your own interest are sufficient to induce you to a punctual correspondence. If I were the only one treated by you in this manner I should conclude, contrary to other appearances, that you wish to break off all connection and correspondence with me ; but every one of your friends have for years past made the same complaints. You acknowledge them to be just, yet will not alter your conduct ; you have suffered already by it, and may still more ; I will therefore say no more on the subject, but repeat my request that you will at least let me know what has become of my things, or in what train you put them. I have nothing new, except mere rumors propagated in London of a victory obtained by Admiral Digby over the Count de Grasse, and some advantages by General Clinton over General Washington ; but as no one can pretend to say by what news this vessel arrived, it can be nothing more than the conjecture of the day, started to amuse. Our last papers are dated the third, and mention the report and nothing more. The King and Minister appear to have been very busily employed for some days with the Russian Ambassador, from whence it is naturally conjectured that arrangements are taking for a peace. God send it soon, and on honorable terms. I have put off going to Ostend until I should have an answer to my letters, nor am I willing to undertake the journey without first hearing from you, as I have calculated before my return to go as far as Holland. I cannot be so long absent, under uncertainty. As the return of the post which carries this will be on Tuesday next, I will wait until then, when, if I hear nothing, I must conclude that my letters have been lost, or that you are sick or dead. Nothing less can excuse you.

I am, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Dr. Bancroft.

TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Ghent, Nov. 9th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you yesterday an angry letter, and this day received yours of the 4th. If you think you have not merited all what I have said, lay the surplus by against you do, I fear it will not be long felt, and then I will only refer you to that letter. I see you will soon lose your present stock of Americans, as they appear to be going their different ways; but you will probably have a succession of them through the winter. I had no right to expect Franks to be either my friend or enemy. Of himself, he is too volatile and trifling to be either to any one for anytime, meer wax, and never either too hot or too cold to receive the impression of the last application; and coming from Madrid, and commissioned by Carmichael, it was natural that he should bring his image and superscription with him. I am, however, sorry that he left Paris so soon, or, rather, that he had not the means for staying and giving way to his natural disposition for a few weeks, as he would have made a good addition to the American adventurers already exhibited on that stage. But can't you come at the purport of the dispatches sent by him? The English papers say that Congress have sent to Spain, in very positive terms, to borrow money. If so, the occasion is favorable, as the Spanish flota is arrived. There was no news in London, of the 3d, of the dreadful shipwreck you mention, though they had accounts of a hurricane which had done some damage in the island. As it seem'd by the account which I saw to have been but very inconsiderable, I did not regard the date so as to recollect it. Melancholy as the reflection must be to a humane mind on such a catastrophe, yet, if it brought peace in the train of its consequences, it would be a great consolation. You mention nothing of Mr. Jay, therefore I presume he was not expected at Paris. The mail

from London ought to have arrived last evening, but did not. I have, therefore, nothing new to send you. I am impatient to hear what is doing in America. When the last letters came away, there was no news from America later than Admiral Graves' letter of the 14th Sept. ; flying reports spoke of Admiral Digby's arrival, and of a second engagement, &c., but no certainty of one or the other. I shall go for Ostend in a day or two, but as I shall not be long on my journey, write and direct to Mr. Sebor, *chez le Veuve, merchant, pres St. Bavo*. He will send me my letters. He and my son join in compliments to you and your little family.

I am most sincerely yours,

S. DEANE.

Doctor Bancroft.

*Thomas Mss.*

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BARNABAS DEANE TO JACOB SEBOR.

Wethersfield, Nov. 11th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have not received a line from you since last December. Whether they have been intercepted by the enemy, or that you have not wrote, I can't say. [Cipher translated.]

I wish exceedingly to hear from you and our Silas Deane and his son. Rivington has lately published a number of letters said to be from Silas Deane to Robert Morris, Col. Duer, J. Wadsworth, &c., which were wrote last May and June. I much fear they will ruin him in this country, although they may contain only the truth. He will be coupled in America with Arnold ; it's already given out that he is in the pay of England, by his enemies ; his friends know not what to say about the letters. For my part, I am more surprized at his imprudence in writing so freely than at any action in his life. He has now given his enemies just the opportunity they wanted for to ruin him in, and I fear he will loose his friends in France by it.

I pray you to write me freely his situation in France, the prospects he has, and the state of his finances. You can do it safely in cypher. I am exceeding anxious to know, and hope you will not fail of writing me. I fear he can never expect anything from this country, except calumny and reproach, and that Congress will not pay him for his past services. I wish he could find out some way to get his accounts settled, and that he would never put pen to paper again about politics. Nothing this war has given me the pain that these letters published in New York have. I am confounded when asked, as I am often, about them.

Pray, when do you expect to see America again? Your friends are well, except father, who has the gout severely. I suppose you know that your two sisters are married. Mr. R. Mumford and family are well. He goes on, as usual, building, &c. ; he trades very little. Col. S. B. Webb is married, and is expected here every day with his wife and family from Jersey. This State have confiscated the estates of the merchants who staid in New York, viz., that part of their property which lay in this state, and have appointed administrators on them, and ordered them to sue those who owe money to them, and oblige them on oath to give an account of what they owe the merchants in New York, which sums is ordered to be sued and put into the treasury of this [State. If any one refuses to render, an account, he is to be doomed what sum the court thinks proper to fix on. This is a cruel law indeed, and will ruin many an honest man. J. Webb is sued to render his account with Charles McEvers. What he will do I can't say, but expect at the next court there will be a great number called on in the same way by this State. You will judge by this the situation of this country at present. We are still hoping for peace ; we expect the capture of Lord Cornwallis will help to bring one about.

I have had many changes in fortune since I saw you. I have been very fortunate at times, and then lost it again. We are building a distill house in Hartford

where I expect to move next spring and carry on business there. I have sold my house in this town. Money is exceeding scarce, goods of every kind falling fast, bills on France from 25 to 30 per cent. discount. I wish to know your sentiments on the prospects of peace, or the continuance of the war. Pray write me often and fully; in particular, don't fail of giving me every information respecting Silas Deane's affairs.

Believe me to be yours,

BARNABAS DEANE.

To Jacob Sebor.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Ghent, Nov. 13th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you the 9th in answer to yours of the 4th, which is your last letter that has come to hand. I fear it is the last you have wrote. I saw papers and letters from London this day to the 8th. Admiral Digby arrived the 26th of Sept. at Sandy Hook, and was getting ready to go with his whole fleet to Chesapeake Bay. Lord Cornwallis appeared to be in a dangerous situation, and General Clinton had embarked 4,000 troops to go to his relief. General Washington had crossed the Delaware with part of his army on his way for Virginia; but General Clinton must wait the issue of a battle at sea before he can set out, whilst General Washington may arrive by land without any obstacle to retard his march. From these movements it seems as if the Southern provinces will be the theatre of the war for the next winter. Arnold had been at New London on an expedition against a fort near the mouth of that harbor, and in order to seize on the shipping and stores there the fort was carried; but, though defended only by the militia and sailors of Groton and New London, it cost the enemy dear; some accounts say two, and some 400 men. General Clinton says in his letter that two regiments suffered greatly, but gives the highest

eulogium on the conduct and bravery of the officers and men. The shipping which lay at anchor escaped by running up the river, but those at the wharves and on the stocks were set on fire, and the flames communicating to a store where there was a quantity of powder, it blew up, and set the town on fire, which was entirely consumed. This is the substance of the news from London, which you may possibly receive before this reaches you. You know that I had many friends in New London with whom I have been intimately connected from my childhood. The thoughts of their being ruined affects me very sensibly. The fleet under Count De Grasse appears to be much superior to that under Digby ; yet the latter, who has took the command, was resolved to hazard a battle. Should it prove a decisive one, we may, I think, hope for peace. I have heard nothing from my things. Pray let me know by what rout you sent them.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S.—Do not excuse yourself on account of your not being certain that your letters will find me here. I shall give such directions that they will find me wherever I may be, if alive.

Doctor Bancroft.

*Thomas Mss.*

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FROM SIMEON DEANE.

Philadelphia, Nov. 14th, 1781.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—How to write to you or what to say, I know not. This I promise when I inform you that Rivington in New York has lately published sundry letters said to be from you, and directed to Messrs. Morris, Wilson, Duer, Wadsworth, Tallmadge, S. H. Parsons, T. Mumford, Root, B. Deane, and S. Deane, the uniform tenor of which seem to be urging, or rather arguing, for a reconciliation with the British govern-

ment. These are reprinted with the greatest avidity by your enemies, and occasion much ferment. Most people assert them to be a forgery. This you may be assured of, that they operate to your utmost disadvantage, and to the extreme distraction of your real friends.

I need not again hint to you what I have often done in conversation, viz., that you had many insidious acquaintances whom you supposed were friends, nor need I say that their consequent conduct has entirely justified my assertions. To tell you a piece of coffee house talk here is needless and improper, but they suspect treason.

Long, my dear brother, have I most affectionately felt for the unjust treatment which I believe you have experienced, after your most zealous exertions. Yet the *Mens conscia recti* has, I hope, never been altered.

I trust, my dear brother, that you are sure that I bear you the most affectionate regard, and would risque my life most freely where it might be of service to your just reputation ; but at present what can be done ? To oppose a torrent is madness ; to sit down quiet, impossible.

The ravages which have so distressed Virginia are now happily over by the reduction of Lord Cornwallis and his army, as you will hear before this arrives. The exultation is here tumultuous and unbounded.

I am now on my return there, and shall, as soon as possible, close my concerns with Sabatier, Despres & Co. Nothing has hitherto prevented it except those distractions. I wrote you from hence lately by Mr. Hopkins and others.

Pray you to be persevering and uniform, and that mode must finally triumph over the opposition.

My dear brother, I am, with the most sincere fraternal attachment.

Ever yours,

S. DEANE.

[Cipher translated. P. S.—I can scarce expect a letter from you for some time to come, as they will, no



doubt, be intercepted. It is asserted last week a letter said to be written by Deane to Congress has been declared by Congress to be a forgery of the English. There are those who deny it to England. They declare that your reasons were sold. It is said to have been captured 8 weeks ago. Appearance justifies it. What can be said, thought, or done by those who are really your friends? Adieu for the present.] May God ever preserve you and confound your enemies.

Can it be possible to prove the sum and mode of insurance made on the Deux Amis and Union, also what part was advanced for them? I fear they will ruin me by not proving them.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Ghent, Nov. 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have written you three letters which remain unreplyed to, which I impute to your illness, from which I most sincerely wish you a speedy deliverance. I am greatly obliged to you for your attention to the books which I hear are arrived at Ostend. We have this day a hand bill from Paris, which says that the Chevalier Lauzun was arrived with the news that Lord Cornwallis and his army surrendered prisoners of war on the 19th October; it is published by order, and the particulars promised to be given the next day. I expect to receive them to-morrow, and will immediately forward them, though you may possibly have the news before my letter arrives, yet it will not be amiss to send it. We have no other news, except that a considerable armament, going from Brest to the East Indies, is expected to sail by the last of this month under Monsr. Vaudreuil. I shall write you in a few days, and forward by some safe hand the papers we talked about. I have no time to add, but am, &c.

Excuse this hasty scrawl. I should not have written

to you this day but for the above news. God grant it may produce peace.

S. DEANE.

Doctor Bancroft.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Ghent, Nov. 23d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 11th did not come to hand until yesterday, and this morning I am favored with yours of the 19th and 20th. I congratulate you on the success in America, and hope it may bring us peace, without which the success of either party is of little consequence. No man ever had greater reasons to wish for peace than what I have ; for until it arrives no one can be more miserable. I have been very far from approving of the proceedings of Congress for three years past, and have been too free and open in expressing of my disapprobation, both in conversation and in my letters. I have ventured to dispose of the politics of our friends in many instances, and, distressed at the prospect of the miseries which this war has brought on my country, and which a continuance of it, whither successful or not, must entail on it for some ages to come, I have endeavored to turn the attention of those with whom I have conversed or corresponded to the issue of the war, and to calculate whither, if the sole object now in our view, as Americans, should be obtained, it would compensate for the losses which we must suffer in the pursuit of it, and the inconveniences and expences we must be at in maintaining the possession of it. Though I have done this from conviction of the truth of whatever I have ventured to advance, and with the best intentions, I have been the most unfortunate that is possible for man to be in the attempt. Every expression of mine on the subject has been misrepre-

sented or attributed to the worst of motives, reflecting on the part I have acted, and on my situation. I never could imagine that my attachment to the true interests of my country, so far as I was able to know them, could be questioned, much less that without connections in Great Britain, and obnoxious to the Ministers, I should be supposed to have spoken or written on the subject in expectation of favors or rewards to be received from them. You know my circumstances, and that few individuals are personally more interested than I am in the continuation and credit of Congress, having the greatest part of my fortune in their hands, which, although they have hitherto unjustly detained, they must one day pay me, if able. I do not pretend to be free from the influence of those passions to which all men are more or less subject, nor that I am insensible of the injuries and injustice done me by Congress ; but I can say with confidence that had they been much greater, they would have had no effect on me to say or to do any thing against the liberties of my country. The party in Congress which embarrassed the whole of the public business of America for more than 12 months, whilst they were endeavoring at my ruin at the same time that they did the most essential injury to America, gave me an opportunity of knowing, and that from dear bought experience, how little of stability there was in their constitution of government, how very unequal it was to the well ordering and governing an extensive country like ours, as well as how little dependence those who served them the most faithfully could have, not on rewards or honors from them, but for common justice. Those observations naturally led me to reflect on the unanimous sentiments of the first and second Congress, expressed with an appeal to the great searcher of hearts for the sincerity of them. In those resolves they declared that they neither seek or wish for any thing more than to be placed in the same state in which America was at the close of the last war. For me, I should not be content, by any means, with that, and

were those the best terms that could be obtained, I should join those who are for continuing the war. But after the most mature reflection on what has passed, and weighing in the best manner I am capable of the circumstances and issue of the present war, I became satisfied that, with a total exemption from taxation, except by our own assemblies, with the powers of legislation and a free commerce, America would be happier and enjoy greater liberty, though still forming a part of the British empire, and under one common head or sovereign, than she could hope for under any other constitution. Fully convinced of this, my natural openness of temper led me to say as much to many Americans, who instead of answering what I offered in support of these sentiments, set themselves to misreport or exaggerate every expression of mine, and to represent me as an enemy to my country and a partisan for British tyranny. In the months of May and June last I wrote to several of my friends in America, particularly to Mr. Root, Mr. Morris, my brothers, and several others. In those letters I expressed my sentiments and the reasons at large on which they were founded. You tell me that the New York paper mentions the taking of a vessel with important letters from L'Orient. This gives me the greatest uneasiness lest mine should be among them; for though I neither expected or requested that my friends would keep their contents secret from our countrymen in public character, yet should they be communicated to them through the English newspapers from New York, such a circumstance would fill the utmost measure of my misfortune. I can easily foresee the consequences; but should they prove ten times worse than I at present imagine, apprehensive as I naturally am, they will have no effect on me with regard to my attachment to my country and to its liberties. To be obnoxious to that country which I once gloried in as the common parent of myself and fellow citizens, for having been among the first to resist her usurpation, and at the same time to become suspected in a country

in which I have experienced so much politeness and hospitality, and to which I have so many private obligations, and to be represented in my own country, which comprehends every thing dear to me in life, as its enemy, it is, my Dear Friend, indeed, it is too much; but I will neither anticipate misfortunes nor sink under them whilst health and spirits remain with me, but for these ten days past both have been threatened to leave me. I have put off my journey to Ostend partly on that account, but more on account of the indecision of some gentlemen here, who proposed to be concerned with me in an adventure from thence to New England. The merchants of this country have good capital acquired in a snug way, as it is called, and not in the line of bold adventure. They expect large remittances by the Spanish fleet, and will venture little until secure of them. I have, fortunately, secured part of the arrearages of an old affair which I had at St. Eustatia, and shall send Mr. Sebor to London next week to try to secure the rest. If I succeed, I shall have wherewith to live through the present storm, but not without a more rigid oeconomy than what I have ever been accustomed to. I cannot think of returning to Paris at present, on account of the above disagreeable circumstances. Were expence of the question, I left no debts behind me in the city, except to Neff the taylor, and to Pascal the coachmaker, and a ballance to Mr. Grand. If I finally determine to pass the winter here, I shall remit you wherewith to satisfy them. I pray you to tell Mr. Grand that I received his letter inclosing his accounts, which until now I have been unable to verify, but that I have no doubt but it is right. It is probable that I shall go to Amsterdam in the course of next month. I sent by Mr. Laurens a letter to Congress, and the state of my accounts. I have since sent duplicates with the particulars by the way of L'Orient and Amsterdam, but am without any answer. You tell me that a Consul General from Congress is arrived in France. Pray, in your first letter after the receipt of this, inform me if he

is instructed to settle the public accounts. I will not add to this long letter, only to pray you to present my most respectful compliments to Doctor Franklin and to Mr. Walpole and family.

I am, my Dear Sir, most sincerely, yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S.—We want two mails from London, consequently have no news here.

Doctor Bancroft.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO WILLIAM TEMPLE FRANKLIN.

Ghent, Nov. 25th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—The above is copy of a letter which I received this morning from Capt. Cochran, and inclosed is the bill which he mentions. His first letter and first bill must probably have miscarried, and I know nothing of the men he speaks of as having indigo in their hands of his. But as the young man must want the money as early as it can be had, I have taken the liberty of transmitting the bill to you, and to pay you the commission which Capt. Cochran charges me with, at least so far as it shall be convenient for you to execute it. I know you have a regard for the young man, and will take pleasure in serving him. If you have any such men as Babut and Labustere at Paris, as they must have received Capt. Cochran's letter, which orders them to account with me, it will be the same to account with you; and I should hope that the effects of this indigo and this bill may set the young man free to return, agreeable to his father's directions. I pray you to present my compliments to Doctor Franklin, and am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

W. T. Franklin, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO JOHN CHARLES DE BAY.

Ghent, Nov. 26th, 1781.

SIR,—I should have answered the letter which you did me the honor to write me the 15th before this, but I waited on account of letters which I expected, and from which I should take my resolution as to the ballances in your hands. I have not as yet received them ; but as you told me it would suit you to give me paper on Paris, I pray you to send me to the amount of four thousand livres, and with it the state of my accounts. You will oblige me by sending the above sum in two setts of bills of two M livres each.

I have, &c., &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. J. Charles De Bay, at Brussels.

*Thomas Mss.*

THOMAS PAINE TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Monday morning, Nov. 26th, 1781.

SIR,—I am much obliged to you for the Abbe Raynel's History. I have made some extracts from it, which has occasioned me to keep it longer than I intended. There are several mistakes in it, and his opinions are often in contradiction to one another. His account of the rejection of the offers of the British Ministry, pages 133, 134, 135, is erroneous. I send you my remarks thereon, which you will please to return to me when you have perused them. His idea of the Alliance is injudicious, because it is not so much what motives brought them together, as what consequences will ensue from it that is the object of philosophical enquiry. And all other considerations apart, the Alliance certainly has a tendency to free the mind of prejudice—I can feel it in myself. But his account of the confederated powers, page 162, is truly cynical. Pages 149 and 155 touches on a political secret.

I am sorry to see Deane's letters get into our papers, as I am very apprehensive they were written for the purpose of publication, and not with a design of being sent to the persons they are directed to. I have mentioned this to Bailey the printer, and advised him to discontinue them, and the more so, as the remarks he makes on them is not equal to the poison they infuse.

I return you my thanks for your kindness to Temple Harris, the Bearer of this. He is an honest, diligent, obliging youth, and I am persuaded will answer Mr. Whiteside's expectations.

Col. Everleigh lent me some English newspapers of yours ; I returned them yesterday, except two which I have sent to the printer. The Col. desired me to mention this to you, as you will find them two short of the proper number ; the other two will be returned on Thursday.

I am Sir, Your Obt. hble. Servt.,

THOMAS PAINE.

Honble. Robert Morris, Esq.

P. S.—Contrary to my expectations the attack on Augustine by the Spaniards is spoke of by the S. C. gentlemen as an agreeable circumstance to them.

*Reed Papers, New York Historical Society.*

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THOMAS PAINE TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Philadelphia, Nov. 26th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Since my arrival I have received a letter from you, dated Passy, May 18, and directed to me at Brest. I intended writing to you by Mr. Baseley, who is consul at L'Orient, but neglected it till it was too late. Mem. : I desired Baseley to mention to you that Mr. Butler of S. Carolina is surprised at Capt. Robinson's drawing on him for money. This Mr. Butler mentioned to me, and as a friend I communicate it to you. I sent you Col. Laurens's draft on Madame



Babut (I think that is her name), at Nantz, for 12 L' d'ors for the expence of the Journey, but have never learned if you received it.

Your former friend Silas Deane has run his last length. In France he is reprobating America, and in America (by letters) he is reprobating France, and advising her to abandon her alliance, relinquish her independence, and once more become subject to Britain. A number of letters, signed Silas Deane, have been published in the New York papers to this effect; they are believed by those who formerly were his friends to be genuine. Mr. Robt. Morris assured me that he had been totally deceived in Deane, but that he now looked upon him to be a bad man, and his reputation totally ruined. Gouverneur Morris hopped around upon one leg, swore they had all been duped, himself among the rest, complimented me on my quick sight, and, by Gods, says he, nothing carries a man through the world like honesty. And my old friend Duer, "Sometimes a sloven, and sometimes a Beau," says: Deane is a damned artful rascal. However, Duer has fairly cleared himself. He received a letter from him a considerable time before the appearance of these in the New York papers, which was so contrary to what he expected to receive, and of such a traitorous cast, that he communicated it to Mr. Luzerne the Minister.

Lord Cornwallis with 7247 officers and men are nabbed nicely in the Chesapeake, which, I presume, you have heard already; otherwise, I should send you the particulars. I think the enemy can hardly hold out another campaign. General Greene has performed wonders to the southward, and our affairs in all quarters have a good appearance. The French Ministry have hit on the right scheme, that of bringing their force and ours to act in conjunction against the enemy.

The Marquis de la Fayette is on the point of setting out for France; but as I am now safely on this side the water again, I believe I shall postpone my second jour-

ney to France a little longer. Lest Doctr. Franklin should not have heard of Deane, I wish you would write to him ; and if anything new transpires in the meantime, and the Marquis do not set off too soon, I shall write by him.

Remember me to Mr. & Mrs. Johnstone, Dr. Pierce, Mr. Watson & Ceasey, and Mr. Wilt. Make my best wishes to Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Alexander, and all the good girls at St. Germain.

I am your friend, &c.,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S.—Mind, I'll write no more till I hear from you. The French fleet is sailed from the Chesapeake, and the British fleet from New York ; and since writing the above a vessel is come up the Delaware, which informs that he was chased by two French frigates to the southward of Chesapeake, which, on their coming up, acquainted him that the French fleet was ahead in chase of a fleet which they supposed to be the British.

N. B.—The French fleet sailed the 4th of this month, and the British much about the same time, both to the southward.

*Conway's Life of Paine*, I. 175.

TO THOMAS BARCLAY.

Ghent, Nov. 27th, 1781.

SIR,—I received yesterday an account of your appointment to be Vice-Consul in France, and of your arrival, on which I take the liberty to congratulate you, and to request that you would inform me if you have instructions from Congress to examine and make a final settlement of my accounts. You will much oblige me by satisfying me on this subject by the first post, as I shall postpone a journey I was on the point of making into Holland until I receive your answer.

I have the honor, &c.

S. DEANE.

T. Barclay, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

## WATSON'S INTERVIEW WITH DEANE.

*November, 1781.*—On my return from Brussels, I called upon the once celebrated Silas Deane at Ghent. He was a member of the first Congress, a sensible and intriguing man, and our early secret agent at the Court of France. He had lost his high standing both in France and America. I found him a voluntary exile, misanthropic in his feelings, intent on getting money, and deadly hostile to his native land. His language was so strong and decided on the subject of American affairs, and evinced so much hostility to his country, that I felt constrained, upon my return to Paris, to announce to Dr. Franklin my conviction that Mr. Deane must be regarded an enemy alike to France and America. He observed to me that similar reports had reached him before, but that he had been unwilling to admit their truth.\*

\* Such, at the time, were my impressions, and the opinions I framed of Mr. Deane. I owe it to truth and justice to record his vindication from these strictures, by a potent pen. John Trumbull, the brilliant author of *McFingal*, to whose perusal and criticism I submitted the compilation of my manuscripts, expressed the following views of Deane's character, in a letter dated January, 1823: "Silas Deane, you say, among other things, 'was intent on getting money, and a deadly enemy to his native land.' But ambition, not avarice, was his ruling passion. In his early transactions at the Court of France, as the political and commercial agent of Congress, he rendered important service to his country; but, exceeding his powers, he made his recall necessary. Exasperated at the cool reception he met with on his return, and at the delay in settling his accounts, he became engaged in a contest with many of the most influential members of Congress. Defeated in many of his purposes, he repaired again to France. He found his political influence lost, with the loss of his official character. The publication of a number of his letters, written during his residence in France, charging the French Court with intrigue and duplicity in their negotiations with us, rendered him obnoxious, and drove him into voluntary exile in the Netherlands, dissatisfied, exasperated, and impoverished almost to penury. Thus forced into an unnatural and friendless residence in foreign countries, he gave himself up to rage, resentment, and actual despair, and vented his passions in execration against France, America, and mankind. In this condition you found him, in the interview you mention. He considered himself as a man not only abused and ill-requited for important services, but denied those pecuniary rewards which had been promised him for his agency in Europe. His subsequent situation and end you probably know."

*Men and Times of the Revolution, by Elkanah Watson.*

TO P. WRAY.

Ghent, Dec. 3d, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I send you a memoire of the negotiations in France. I know not if it will prove as entertaining or instructive as you imagined; but I have been careful to insert every material transaction, and to set down nothing for the truth of which I could not answer. I flatter myself that I have written with so much plainness and impartiality that there is no need of any comment of mine. I have it in view to complete memoirs of what has come to my knowledge of the politics, proceedings, and factions in Congress, from their first meeting to this year. My design thereby is to explain many of the transactions, to justify my own conduct, and to point out the real causes of most of the events of this period. In doing this I shall shew the causes which assembled the first Congress so generally, and which produced an apparent unanimity in all their resolutions; in the next place, shew that the parties which made their appearance in the second Congress, soon after their sitting, really existed in the first, and I shall give a brief history of the character, views, and progress of those parties and their leaders from the first to the present time. This well executed will, I flatter myself, with the present memoire, throw more light on the subject than any of the histories (and several are preparing) which will be published on the subject. I send you a copy.

I remain, &amp;c., S. DEANE.

Mr. Wray.

TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Ghent, Dec. 4th, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have no letters from you since the 20th ulto., though I have repeatedly written to you, and in the most pressing stile, for an answer. I can say nothing more than I have already said on the sub-

ject of your inattention to your friends when absent, but must regard you in future as being absolutely incorrigible, and content myself with receiving such letters as you shall send, without any certain dependance on them. I wished exceedingly to know if Williamson had been at Paris. It was not an idle curiosity, and had you told me no more than yes or no, it would have been of consequence to me, and perhaps to both of us. I have urged the simple question in three letters, but in vain. My letter of the 23d, written without cypher, was of some importance. I have sent you two since, praying to know if you received it; but you have not found leisure to tell me. What am I to think of this? I must tell you that after similar treatment from any other man on earth, I would never again put pen to paper on his account. I have received a long historical letter from my brother of Virginia. It is dated at Philadelphia, Sept. 7th. He says that the distress and misery of Virginia were beyond description, each army plundering or living at free quarters, in their turn, on the people; that our old friend A. Lee was printing away and stirring up fresh quarrels and factions every day, &c.; but he wrote before the face of affairs had changed. I shall go for Ostend to-morrow, and return in five or six days. My absence from hence can be no excuse for your not writing, as your letters will always find me.

I have many things of importance to suggest to you, but so long as you regard my letters of too little consequence to be answered, why should I write? I will not add, for I am really hurt and out of all temper. My compliments to Mr. Walpole and son if at Paris. I am, notwithstanding your neglect of me, most sincerely your friend, &c.

S. DEANE.

P. S.—If you write me, which I must still hope for, tell me if Mr. Barclay is at Paris, and if he is authorized to settle my accompts and to pay me.

Doctor Bancroft.

*Thomas Mss.*

FROM JOHN JAY.

Madrid, December 5th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of the 26 Sept. did not reach me until the 29 ulto, altho' you mention that it was to have been dispatched in a packet of Doctor Franklin's the subsequent Saturday. From your long silence I suspected that you had not yet returned from the journey mentioned in your former letter. I am glad to find that I was mistaken, and that you still continue mindful of your friend. It gives me pleasure to hear that your accounts are ready for settlement. The sooner that business is finished the better. Let there be no altercations about Peace. You know what I mean. It is better to suffer a little in point of property than reputation. You have enemies, and some of them bitter. When you shall have acquainted yourself, it will then, perhaps, be proper to render it necessary for them to do the like. By no means omit preparing your case for publication as soon as it may be seasonable; let neither time, application, or expense be wanting to complete and make it perfect. I have seen the Freeman's Journal. In times like these the Press will naturally be licentious. When government becomes more stable, and the laws again resume their full authority, writers and printers will find themselves sufficiently restrained; for tho' indictments for libels will ever be odious and unpopular, private actions for slander and defamation will be viewed in a different light. When it may become necessary for me to repair to Paris is very uncertain. I think another campaign will precede serious negotiations for Peace. I congratulate you on our successes in Virginia and Carolina. They are very important; and among other good consequences to be expected from them, that of cementing and increasing our union with France will not be the least. [Cipher translated. If you had given me the character of Carmichael when at Congress, he never would have been with me. In all

circumstances considered, it appears to me a little extraordinary that you who knew Carmichael should, notwithstanding, have been silent about his tricks; the fact, I imagine, was, that you was taken in by his fair but delusive appearances. For my part I was greatly mistaken in the man.]

Mrs. Jay presents her compliments to you.

I am, Dear Sir, your friend and servant,

JOHN JAY.

Silas Deane, Esq.

*Jay Mss.*

TO GURDON S. MUMFORD.

Ghent, Dec. 16th, 1781.

DEAR MUMFORD,—As your uncle is urgent for your being fixed in some commercial house in Amsterdam as soon as it is possible, and Messrs. De Neuville's being disposed to receive you as early as it can be made agreeable to you, I desire you to inform Doctor Franklin of your situation, and, if he has no objection to your leaving him, that you set out as soon as possible for Amsterdam, taking this place in your way. I have written to Messrs. De Neuville's to expect you some time in the next month. It will be best to take the diligence for Lisle, and there you will find one that sets out every day for this city, in which you will find me, if you arrive in three weeks from this, by inquiring at the Hotel de Mesord Champons, where the diligence will set you down. I have received letters from your uncle and father which are so pressing on this subject that I cannot delay to place you in a house which has politely offered to receive you; though were I to act from my own judgement, I should for another year prefer your present situation. Present my most respectful compliments to Doctor Franklin, and be assured of everything in my power to serve you.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. G. S. Mumford.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Ghent, Dec. 20th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 6th on my return from Ostend, since which I have been confined to my chamber for the greatest part of the time by a violent cold, attended with a slight fever, and the most obstinate cough I ever experienced. The contents of yours is by no means a cordial in my illness. What I apprehended in mine of the 23d ulto. is realized, and from the intolerant spirit which rages in America, I expect no charitable construction on either my words or actions. It is, indeed, hard that I am also to be deprived of your correspondence after the long and intimate friendship which has subsisted between us; but if your sentiments in politics differ from mine, I must still flatter myself that you would not propose this but on account of the delicate situation in which you may consider yourself. I have for sometime feared that our efforts in America to establish more perfect equality and liberty than ever were known in the world, or than what, perhaps, are consistent with civil society, would terminate in a tyranny which neither we nor our fathers in America ever had any idea of. I have freely expressed those apprehensions and my reasons for them, and now find by experience that they are realized. I pray you to ask the taylor Neff for a copy of my account. I hope that your adjusting that and one or two other small affairs for me at Paris will not be taken amiss, or that I shall hurt you by my correspondance on those subjects until they are closed.

I am your most Affectionate and most unfortunate friend,

S. DEANE.

Doctor Bancroft.

*Thomas Mss.*



TO P. WRAY.

Ghent, Dec. 20th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 14th is before me. I received the box of books sent to care of Mr. Hennessey, but no bill with them. I pray you to send me one in your next. I parted with my friend at Ostend last Thursday who expected to set out that evening, and of course must be with you before this. I hope he may be able to succeed in the business he wishes to undertake, though it has become more dangerous since Congress have come to the strange resolution to seize on and confiscate all goods of British manufacture, how ever purchased and imported. I met Mr. Barclay, the Consul for Congress, at Ostend; he was on his way for Amsterdam, and to my surprize found that he had no orders as to any settlement of my accounts. I wrote you so particularly by Mr. Sebor that I shall not add until I hear from you.

I have, &c.,

S. DEANE.

P. S.—Mr. De Bay prays me to procure him a good draught of the city of London.

Mr. Wray.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO FREDERICK GRAND.

Ghent, Dec. 21st, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—Doctor Bancroft informs me that he shewed you my letter of the 23d ult. that has sufficiently informed you of my feelings on the reports then circulating at Paris. I had, however, resolved to return to Paris immediately after my journey to Ostend, though I am sorry to say that my principal inducement was to meet Mr. Barclay, the Consul, and close my accounts. I received, by order of Congress, a reso-

lution of that body, informing me that Mr. Barclay was instructed to settle them, a copy of which I send you inclosed. At Ostend I met with Mr. Barclay, who assured me he had no such orders, but, on the contrary, that it had been privately suggested to him by members of Congress that it was not meant that he should have any thing to do in the affair. Astonished beyond expression at hearing this, he the more fully to convince me, shewed me his orders. I have only to observe on this, that the resolution of Congress declaring that the Consul was directed to settle my accounts is dated the 12th of Sept., and Mr. Barclay's orders, in which no notice is taken of my accounts, the 5th of Oct. following. After this I can have nothing to hope for from men capable of such open duplicity of conduct. I have been very ill and confined to my chamber ever since my return from Ostend, or I should have written you a long letter on this and some other subjects. I still intend to do it as soon as I get a little more strength, for I am at present very weak, and should not write but to convince you that the reports that Congress have at last taken measures for the settlement of my accounts and for doing justice are not true. I sent inclosed to your son a bill for nineteen hundred livres, which he informed me was passed to my credit. I hope to be able to pay you the ballance, and, in the mean time, have the honor to be, with much respect,

Dear Sir, etc.,

S. DEANE.

F. Grand, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

[Enclosure.]

By the United States in Congress Assembled.

September 12th, 1781.

The Committee, to whom was referred the letter from Mr. Deane of the 15th of May, report

"That provision is made for the examination of Mr. Deane's account by the appointment of a Vice Consul."

Whereupon, Ordered that Mr. Deane be informed of that appointment.

Extract from the minutes.

GEO. BOND, Deputy Secy.

*Holbrooke Mss.*

TO WILLIAM TEMPLE FRANKLIN.

Ghent, Dec. 24th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours of the 19th, which informs me that you have done every thing that could be expected for young Chocron, and am sorry that the remittances were not equal to the demands on his accounts, as I agree with you in opinion of his present situation. I have been for near ten days past confined to my chamber by the most obstinate cold I ever was attacked with ; this has prevented me from writing to your honored grandfather on a subject in which we are both of us interested to a certain degree, but which in my circumstances distresses me exceedingly ; in a word, I received a letter forwarded by him, the inclosed resolutions of Congress, which led me to conclude that the period was at last arrived for closing their public accounts in Europe, and to put an end to my complaints on that subject, and I determined to improve the favorable moment ; but on my interview with Mr. Barclay at this place, he informed me that he had no orders on the subject. My astonishment was such that I could scarce believe him serious until he shewed me his original orders, dated the 5th of October ; this, however, increased my astonishment and excited his, when the date of his order came to be compared with that of the resolution of Congress, which you see was the 12th of Sept. This is no place either for news or politics, and our diversions, except a good theatre, are but few. My most respectful com-

pliments to Doctor Franklin. I have the honor to be  
with much esteem, Dear Sir,

Your most obedt., &c.,

S. DEANE.

W. T. Franklin, Esq.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO MR. NEFF.

Ghent, Dec. 24th, 1781.

SIR,—I pray you would make out my account and  
give it to Doctor Bancroft, who will send it to me.  
I must expect that you will not charge any thing too  
high, since I have had so many cloaths of you. The  
sooner you send it, the sooner it will be settled by, Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Neff.

*Thomas Mss.*

TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Ghent, Dec. 24th, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,—About ten days since I was seized  
with a hoarseness, and an oppression at my breast, at-  
tended with a dry cough, which, taking after a common  
cold, I neglected it at first, but it increased, attended  
with a slight fever and uncommon restlessness at night,  
so as not to be able to enjoy more than two or three  
hours of imperfect sleep in a night, and this continu-  
ing, makes me uneasy. I hate tampering with doctors,  
and have confined myself to a warm chamber, and to  
a very light diet with lemonade and tea, or drink  
made of bran sweetened with honey, but my cough  
and indisposition to sleep continues. Pray send me  
some effectual but simple recipe by the first post, and  
you will much oblige me. I have desired Neff the taylor  
to give you his bill against me ; pray send that to me

also. We have no news here, and some other time must be referred for politics, for I am too feeble to enter on the subject at present.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Doctor Bancroft.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO JOHN CHARLES DE BAY.

Ghent, Dec. 26th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I should have done myself the honor of writing to you before this in answer to your obliging favor, but a journey to Ostend and an illness which for some days past has confined me to my chamber, have prevented. The difference of the time referred to in notes of the payment of the bills cannot now be very material, as the time is not very distant, and if I should have immediate want of the money, I can draw on you, or you can give me paper payable at that time here; but I will thank you just to mention in answer to this what the time is.

I have the honor, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. J. Charles De Bay.

*Thomas Mss.*

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TO FREDERICK GRAND.

Ghent, Dec. 26th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I did myself the honor to write you a few days since, but am still too ill to leave my chamber, and consequently unable to be very particular in my letter, which serves only to cover a bill for 2100 livres on Monsr. Vincens. I should have sent it sooner, but when I first received the bill expected to have had the pleasure of presenting it in person, but my illness, with other circumstances, prevented me;

and being obliged to go for Amsterdam as soon as I gain sufficient strength for such a journey, my return to Paris will hardly be earlier than next spring. I shall have occasion to draw on you for nearly the amount of this bill to answer some little accounts I left unclosed. Please to inform by a line of its coming to hand, &c.

I am, &c.,

S. DEANE.

Mr. Grand.

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*Thomas Mss.*

FROM BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.

Wethersfield, Dec. 27th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—I have just received Rivington's paper of the 12th inst., in which I find a letter published, directed to me and signed by yourself. As this is but one out of the many said to have been taken in Europe and directed to different persons in America, tho' signed by the same author, I presume you must ere this have heard of the capture of this *budget*, or the publication of those fictitious letters. It is only my duty to inform you of the conclusions which have been drawn from them and the effects they have had on the minds of the people.

On the 20th of October last Mr. Rivington gave us a very pompous account of the important discoveries made by Government in the capture of a mail in Europe, containing letters from Messrs. Franklin, Deane, &c., which he promised to lay before the public in due order. Since that time he has been constantly publishing, tho' I have seen no letters from any person but yourself. The opinions of people are different respecting them, some believing them a forgery, but the most that they are genuine. The former class of men, of course, remain your friends; but the latter, among which are many of your late strongest advocates, have become your most inveterate enemies.

Comparing your former character and late conduct together, the epithet of *Traitor* is very freely bestowed on you, and that you have sold your conscience, your political principles, and with them, like Arnold, would have been glad to have sold your country, is but little doubted. In fine, you are viewed as a disappointed statesman, labouring under the just censures of your country, 'till the malice of thwarted pride and ambition has driven you to the dreadful step of changing your principles, and giving the enemy your utmost exertions to overthrow a system which you, with the rest of our country, had solemnly pledged your honour, fortune, and life to defend. Whatever may have been your views in writing those letters (if you are really their author), depend on it these are the conclusions drawn from them by your country. If they are the wicked forgery of your enemies, it behoves you to undeceive your friends, and take off occasion from the prejudiced to asperse you. I cannot, however, omit making a few observations on the letter directed to me.

You say Great Britain is determined on no consideration to acknowledge the independence of America. The first question to be asked is, whether she is able to subjugate and reduce us to her own terms. For it matters very little with us whether Great Britain acknowledges our independence or gives over the conquest of our country. The case of the United Provinces when they revolted from Spain are a specimen of this.

We have, in the course of this war, seen an army of 30,000 disciplined troops, aided by a powerful navy in one quarter, 10,000 more in another, under experienced officers, spreading devastation and ruin wherever they went; but what has become of them? The former by death, desertion, and captivity have almost dwindled away, and the latter were all swept off at a stroke. Considerable reinforcements have been sent to this country, and when long and fatal experience proved that the northern States were not to be intimi-

dated by cruelties nor conquered by the sword, the ministry very wisely determined to carry the war into the Southern States. A short survey of the progress of the enemy thro' the Carolinas and Virginia will shew the futility of their attempts. Elated by a few partial successes, they supposed themselves masters of the country, 'till the spirit of the people was roused, when they were as heartily driven from every post which they had established in the Carolinas by the victorious army under General Greene, vanquished and defeated in almost every action, and where they have supposed themselves victorious it has only been a prelude to their overthrow, 'till finally a *chosen*, and what Great Britain believed a *victorious*, army have been obliged to surrender prisoners of war to our illustrious Commander in Chief. Very different was the prospect in Virginia at the date of your letter; but your knowledge of the progress of this unhappy war must have taught you that where the enemy have appeared the most certain of success, they have been the most fatally confounded.

Upon a retrospect of a seven years' war, what is the situation of our *subduing* enemy? Of about 60,000 men which have been sent to America, there remains only a small garrison at New York, and another at Charleston, at both which places, from answering the purposes of subjugating a country, they are no better than besieged garrisons. This is at present the state of the British arms in America, and, unless we ruin ourselves by our own negligence, what reason have we to renounce the prize which we have been contending for?

I have ever entertained the highest veneration for the constitution of Great Britain, but when we find it so essentially mutilated in many parts, we have but little to hope either from their lenity or justice.

The objection that France will afford no further assistance than just to keep the war alive is of but little weight. The decided superiority of the French



fleet under the Count de Grasse in the American seas, the last campaign, which led to the capture of Lord Cornwallis, and the very respectable auxiliary force by land under the Count de Rochambeau, are no small proof of the spirit with which France confirms the treaty and cements our union.

You say that the northern powers of Europe will not be idle spectators of our success, nor admit our independence. We cannot pretend to foretell future events, but what evidence have they as yet given of this? Notwithstanding the utmost exertions of Great Britain, it is a notorious fact that they have not yet been able to form a single alliance, nor do we find a more friendly line of conduct pursued towards her than the other belligerent powers.

With respect to the enormous debt already contracted, and which you suppose must be soon insupportable to us, however great it may be in reality, we have little reason to believe it can be lessened by being connected with a people who are already loaded with a debt of near £200,000,000. Add to this the expences of our own government must, at any rate, be paid by ourselves; and in every war which the pride or haughtiness of Great Britain may involve her, we must bear a part. If, under a free and happy independence, we should be unable to support ourselves, in state of dependence it hardly appears probable that we can support ourselves and afford any considerable aids to the parent state. In the former case, our commerce, that source of national wealth, would be unrestricted, and our ports open to all the world. In the latter condition, trade would probably be so regulated that Great Britain would receive in duties the greatest share of the profits.

These are but the cursory speculations of a soldier who has but little to do with politics; but they are the sentiments of one who has engaged in the profession, in the defence of the liberties and independence of his country, firmly persuaded that a reunion with

Great Britain would be the ruin of America, and that our political happiness, honor, and prosperity rest solely in the *Freedom, Sovereignty, and Independence* of these States. These being the articles of my political creed, nothing but a total change of principles or intire subjection can induce me to rest under a government which has broke such solemn compacts and done us so much mischiefs.

I have wrote thus freely, tho' not fully determined whether you are the author of the letter which I have attempted to answer, or not. In either case they will serve to convince you of the light in which you are viewed by your countrymen in general, as well as for my own political principles.

I am very sensible of the many embarrassments under which we labour; but when I reflect on the importance of the prize for which we are contending, I cannot but hope we may soon exert ourselves, as under the smiles of heaven, to secure an honorable peace and lasting freedom and independence to our country. I am, Sir,

Your most obedt. Servt.,

BENJ. TALLMADGE.

P. S.—If Mr. Sebor is still with you, please to present my compliments to him. I have not heard from him since he has been in Europe.

Hon. Silas Deane, Esq.,  
Paris.

*Jay Mss., New York Historical Society.*















